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New Statesman

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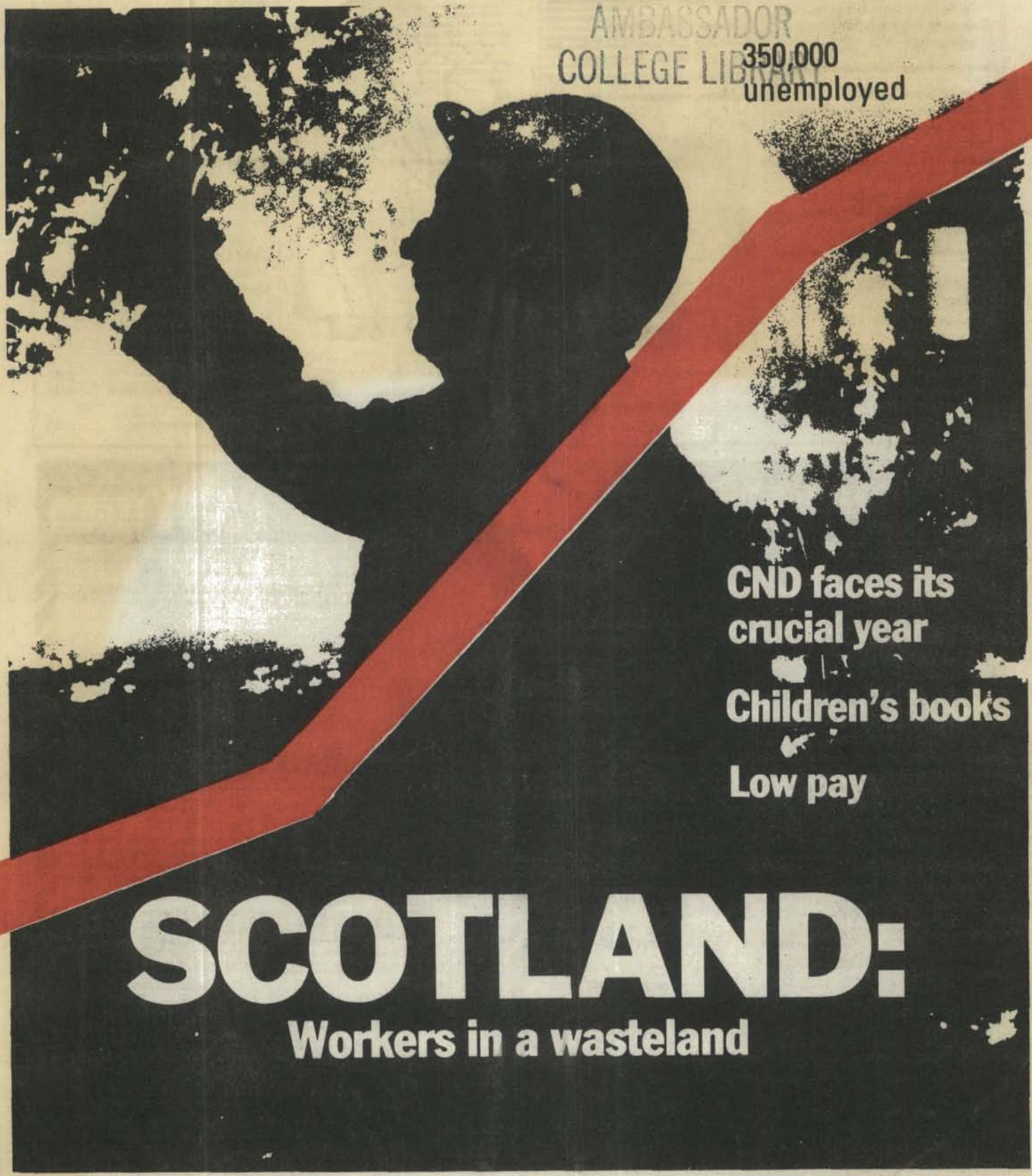

350,000 unemployed

CND faces its crucial year

Children's books

Low pay

SCOTLAND:

Workers in a wasteland

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New Statesman

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New Statesman Vol 104 No 2698 3 December 1982

Down but certainly not out

REPORTS OF MICHAEL Foot's political demise are, as they say, premature. The unattributed stories that have been appearing in the national press bear all the hallmarks of unrepresentative individuals sounding off to political journalists from behind the safety of conversations conducted on a 'lobby' basis. They have been none the less politically damaging to the Labour Party and its leadership for all that, because they have been used as the latest evidence that Labour is not managing to get its political act together.

The really critical problem, however, is not the effect that hostile press reporting of Labour's internal affairs may be having on public opinion in general and public voting intentions in particular. Public opinion has been getting increasingly volatile over recent years. The way in which Michael Foot did or did not handle the question of shadow cabinet portfolios for Messrs Varley and Kinnock is not the stuff of political watersheds. The critical problem is internal to the Labour Party. Morale and nerve are so worn down at the end of 1982 that the real danger is that the principal Labour actors may very shortly begin to think and act as if the next General Election is already as good as lost to Mrs Thatcher.

That is, of course, not an admission that would ever be made by professional politicians in public. Even if it were a certainty that the next election was already lost, such an admission would turn defeat into rout. But, if senior Labour politicians concluded in their private moments that the electoral game next time was up, the effect would be nearly as bad. For they would begin to act on that basis – to adopt tactical positions designed to put them in the best personal position after the event.

There are certainly those within the labour movement who would not be unhappy at an election defeat next time. They are mainly those who for personal or ideological reasons think that defeat would give a boost to the particular brand of socialism for which they think they stand. The critical thing at this juncture is that these minority groups, combined with the present latent but strong mood of defeatism, should not persuade the majority of the Labour Party that the task of getting rid of Thatcher next time is so uphill as to be hopeless. For the facts are otherwise. Labour may certainly lose the next election. A combination of events since 1979 and unforced errors as yet uncommitted may well put Mrs Thatcher back for another term. But if that happens, it needs to be said clearly that as things stood in December 1982 it did not have to be so.

This week's MORI poll shows the Tories eight points ahead of Labour. Our own survey of local authority by-elections (see details on page 6 and Peter Kellner's comments on page 7), suggests that the two main parties are running more or less neck-and-neck. Suppose that the 'truth' is somewhere between the two. That gives the Tories a lead over Labour that is substantially less that the advantage that Labour held over the Tories in the period immediately before the 1970 election – which Edward Heath won. Labour support then drained away almost visibly during the second half of the election campaign itself. It did so probably because the electorate as a whole sensed that the Prime Minister, under the spotlight of a General Election, was revealed as having no new ideas for dealing with problems that had remained intractable during the lifetime of the incumbent administration. This time there is a limit to the length of time that Mrs Thatcher can continue to invoke the Falklands as a device for failing to answer attacks on the monumental failures of economic, industrial, social and foreign policy over which she has presided since 1979. It is possible that this moment is upon us.

If the Labour Party today was facing the situation in which it found itself this time last year, hopeless resignation would be at least understandable. The great SDP balloon was then at its most distended. The Labour Party for the first time in modern memory was lying third in the opinion polls, behind the Alliance. But, despite all that has and has not happened in the past twelve months, Labour's situation this December is totally different. If a General Election were called tomorrow and took place within the month, the Tories might end up with a 2 point lead on polling day. It would not be a good result, but it would not be catastrophic.

All we can be reasonably sure of is that in fact the next election will not be for many months to come. There is now a substantial 'soft' element in the Tory support being recorded by the opinion polls. Labour's present support has a very solid 'core' feel to it. There is no sign of the SDP bandwagon starting to roll again. If the Labour leadership can bring itself to believe that there is a good chance of beating the Tories next time and (more importantly) if it can begin to act accordingly, Mrs Thatcher is *not* assured of another five years. If not, Labour gets locked into a self-fulfilling proposition. □

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Who is a threat to State secrecy?

A COPY of the PV (Positive Vetting) form which is used to check people in sensitive security positions, has been obtained by the *New Statesman*. Although the questionnaire goes into some detail about possible links with Communist states, it asks for less information about personal background and interests than many recruitment questionnaires.

The questionnaire is in four parts, but only two nearly identical parts have to be filled in. Questions on political affiliations start by asking 'have you ever been a member of the Communist Party in the UK'. The same is asked about Fascist organisations; a footnote suggests that 'the word "Communist" embraces "Trotskyists" for the purpose of this document. An affirmative answer will not necessarily disqualify you from employment'. It explains that the questions must be answered because a PV check will lead to a job which 'will put you in touch with information of outstanding security importance'.

Candidates for vetting have to provide at least two character referees, who are then approached by Investigating Officers, employed variously by the Ministry of Defence, Foreign Office, or MI5. Such officers are usually recruited from among middle-aged or retired service or police officers. One former security official describes them generically as 'retired majors with emotional problems'. Investigating Officers will ask referees more searching questions, including those about candidates' sexual orientation and (Scottish or Welsh) nationalist sympathies, if appropriate.

Spouses or fiancées are also investigated, as are the candidate's father and mother. But the PV form itself does not ask for details of girlfriends, boyfriends or one's sex life, unless marriage is intended.

Because of the huge volume of PV checks automatically made by government departments – a practice criticised by Lord Bridge in his report on the Queen's former bodyguard, Commander Trestrail – PV 'clearances' often take two or three months to complete, considerably holding up recruitment or the filling of vacancies. A more frequent, lesser check, 'Normal Vetting' (NV), according to notes circulated to civil service Departmental Establishment Officers, involves

> a check with the Criminal Record Office to see if the person is or has been a member of a subversive organisation or has subversive associations. NV is carried out in a blanket way . . .

But an NV check is said to be 'inadequate to spot those whose personal, political or other convictions lead them to disclose classified or protected information to further some cause . . . '. The notes, themselves 'classified', also reveal that the PV system is the responsibility of the 'Personnel Security Committee' in the Cabinet Office. That committee's latest assessment of the threat to British State secrets was a 1970 report by a special group led by Lord Helsby, a former head of the civil service. The Helsby Committee on Protective Security reported, in the wake of the 1960s development of the New Left, that

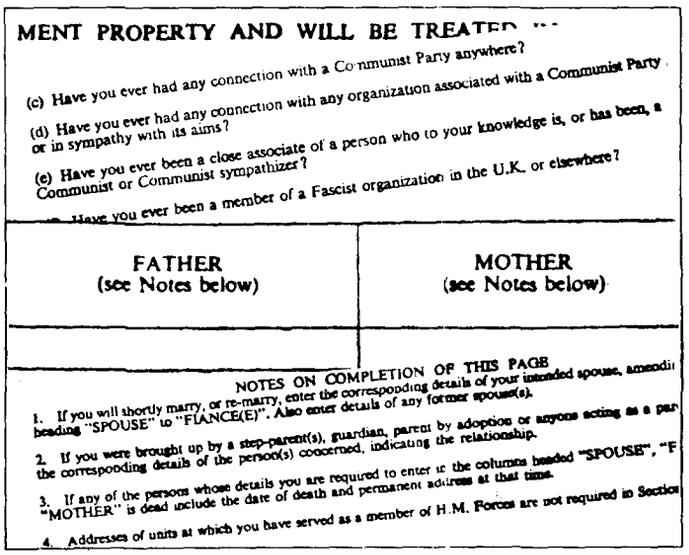
> The Communist Party has a fundamental interest in subverting the state . . .

But:

> Individual Trotskyists, Maoists, anarchists might use protected information in such a way that would further their political aims or give such information publicity if they thought it would embarrass or damage the reputation of the Government.

'Fascists', it concluded, 'may present a more minor danger'.

Duncan Campbell



MENT PROPERTY AND WILL BE TREATED ...

(c) Have you ever had any connection with a Communist Party anywhere?

(d) Have you ever had any connection with any organization associated with a Communist Party or in sympathy with its aims?

(e) Have you ever been a close associate of a person who to your knowledge is, or has been, a Communist or Communist sympathizer?

... Have you ever been a member of a Fascist organization in the U.K. or elsewhere?

FATHER (see Notes below)	MOTHER (see Notes below)

NOTES ON COMPLETION OF THIS PAGE

1. If you will shortly marry, or re-marry, enter the correspondoing details of your intended spouse, amendi heading "SPOUSE" to "FIANCE(E)". Also enter details of any former spouse(s).

2. If you were brought up by a step-parent(s), guardian, parent by adoption or anyone acting as a par the correspoonding details of the person(s) concerned, indicating the relationship.

3. If any of the persons whose details you are required to enter in the columns headed "SPOUSE", "F "MOTHER" is dead include the date of death and permanent address at that time.

4. Addresses of units at which you have served as a member of H.M. Forces are not required in Section

Labour group will register

JIM MORTIMER, the Labour party's general secretary, may be having trouble making his register acceptable to the courts, but he is faring better with some members of the constituency Left.

The executive of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy voted by 2-1 to recommend registration to its AGM next January. The CLPD is currently holding a ballot of its members on this issue, although the result will not be binding on the AGM.

A founder-member of the CLPD, Victor Schonfield, has made it clear he thinks senior officers will leave CLPD if the vote goes against registering. He writes in one of the six statements that went out with the ballot papers: 'The principled solution if you find yourself fundamentally opposed to a particular political group is to leave it. Unfortunately many of the CLPD's undeclared opponents [those who oppose registration] have not chosen the principled course. If they carry the day at the AGM, however, a number of us intend to do so.'

One straw in the wind for the CLPD vote is that the annual meeting of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, held in Newcastle, decided to apply for the register (although they are refusing to give the National Executive their membership lists). The motion was passed by a 3-1 majority.

The meeting also urged constituencies not to expel members at the behest of the NEC. Probably more significant, however, was the LCC's apparent eagerness to seek party unity, if one can judge by the elections for the LCC's executive. Fifty per cent of the LCC's 700 members voted in what is one of the few measures of Left-wing opinion in the constituencies. Articulate advocates of non-registration, such as Jon Lansman and Anne Cesek, were voted off the 20-strong executive. Others, such as Audrey Wise, had their votes cut. Most of the candidates who failed to be elected were the strongest opponents of registration.

Patrick Wintour

Revolt on TUC ban on People's March

THE TUC leadership and Labour's new Right-wing NEC are facing an embarrassing revolt over a TUC ban on union support for participation in a new jobs protest on the lines of last year's Liverpool/London People's March for Jobs.

The ban was agreed last week following pressure from Labour's leadership who feared that organising such an event would weaken election work for Labour in the event of an early general election next year. However, last weekend the TUC's decision received two blows. Firstly, the executive of the fourth biggest union, NALGO (which is not affiliated to Labour), voted to back the march. Secondly, a meeting of the North West TUC's recalled People's Convention for Jobs and Peace, which represents largely rank-and-file opinion and many of whose delegates participated in last year's People's March, angrily demanded that the unemployed be given 'the right to march'.

They made it clear that they will not be impressed by any suggestions that campaigning on jobs be restricted to seminars and press conferences on Labour's alternative strategy. At the convention they drew up plans for a series of mass campaigning activities on unemployment to ensure that jobs are a key election issue in the region. These include plans for a week of action on unemployment in the spring which would include large festivals in Liverpool and Manchester.

They also called for the setting up of broadly-based 'Towns' Committees' capable of involving not just unions but community groups, ethnic organisations, women's groups, tenants and churches in the fight against unemployment.

Commenting on the convention, Colin Barnett, secretary of the North West TUC, accused 'the bureaucrats at Congress House' of being afraid 'to make common cause with the unemployed'. He warned that 'unless unemployment is made a dramatic issue in election year many voters may not bother to turn out and vote'.

Ken Ferguson

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Gay News may close

THE OWNER of *Gay News* has admitted that the paper may not survive beyond the end of this month. At a meeting of well over 100 supporters and staff of the paper, held in London on Monday night, Robert Palmer said that he did not have the £10,000 which is due for payment to Denis Lemon, the former owner, on 31 December.

The payment is one of five instalments, totalling £71,000 which are still due to Lemon in return for his shareholding in *Gay News*, which he sold to Palmer earlier this year. Lemon has already received £50,000 in the form of a £24,000 'golden handshake' and a £26,000 down payment.

When he took over the paper Palmer hoped that he could pay the instalments to Lemon from *Gay News*'s profits. (Palmer admits that he has no capital of his own.) However, by the end of this summer he realised that the paper would not produce a profit of £10,000 by the end of December, so he embarked on a cost-saving programme. Three staff were made redundant, another two resigned, and the size of the paper was cut from 56 to 40 pages. Despite this he still cannot meet the £10,000 demand.

Andrew Lumsden, the editor of *Gay News*, told Monday's meeting that the paper was 'bumping along' financially, making neither a huge profit nor a huge loss. (Exact financial information is hard to find, since no accounts have been filed at Companies' House since 1980.)

Denis Lemon's shares in Gay News Ltd were sold to Robert Palmer Marketing Ltd, but they are held in trust until all the instalments have been paid. Palmer told Monday's meeting that, under the terms of the deal, he is forbidden to assign the shares to anyone but Lemon. Moreover, if Palmer fails to pay any of the instalments, ownership of Gay News Ltd instantly reverts to Lemon.

Those who attended Monday's meeting were angry at Lemon's behaviour. Lemon has already been asked to waive his financial claims on the paper, but there is no sign that he will do so. Even if the company goes into liquidation Lemon will continue to own the title of *Gay News*.

There have been suggestions that the staff of *Gay News* should 'do a *City Limits*' by setting up their own, collectively-run newspaper. Another idea is that, if Lemon regains the ownership in the New Year, a trust be formed to buy the paper from him; but it seems unlikely that Lemon would agree to this.

When the *New Statesman* asked Lemon if he might become involved in *Gay News* again, he replied: 'God knows.'

Francis Wheen

TUC acts on union-busters

LAST Wednesday the TUC general council agreed to monitor the activities of union-busting firms in this country. The TUC's concern stems from features in the *New Statesman* (5 November) and on BBC TV's *Money Programme* (7 November) which highlighted the British activities of American-based union-busters – or Labour Management Consultants, as they prefer to style themselves.

Two of the leading US management consultants, Tony McKeown of Modern Management and John Sheridan of Sheridan Associates, have both admitted to having clients in Britain. Tony McKeown told *Money Programme* that he has been active in Britain since the mid-1970s, while Sheridan has been consulted by an American bank which is operating in Britain. But the TUC's main concern must be that Britain will spawn its own labour management consultants. *The Money Programme* revealed that the London Chamber of Commerce was to host a union-busting seminar on 28 March 1983. This seminar has now been cancelled.

But British labour management consultants are now emerging. Earlier this year Radio 4's *File on Four* programme inteviewed Oxford-based Roger Rosewall, described as a 'home-grown labour relations consultant'. Rosewall said that many of his clients felt that 'now is the time to repay the unions for all the difficult years the unions caused in the past.' Rosewall, incidentally, is a former industrial organiser for the Socialist Workers Party, an ex-ASTMS official and now a member of the SDP's Industrial Relations Working Party.

Rosewall is certainly not our only home-grown consultant. *The Money Programme* interviewed Max Eggert, a Sussex-based management consultant who is also a Church of England curate. Eggert, who might be described as a 'born-again' consultant, described how he attended US union-busting seminars, found them 'exciting' and realised the appeal of showing companies how it is 'cost effective to run a firm without a trade union'.

Alex Gerlis

MISCELLANY

Someone for Denis

The delightful Mr Denis Thatcher, consort to the PM, has quietly become a director of Pitney-Bowes Ltd, the office equipment manufacturers. Why? 'We were looking for a new non-executive director,' says Chris Hewitt, company secretary of P-B. But at the last count there were 56 million people in the United Kingdom: what qualities did Mr Thatcher have that the others didn't? Mr Hewitt could not say. Had Mr Thatcher any past connections with Pitney-Bowes? 'No,' said Mr Hewitt. Could anyone at Pitney-Bowes give any reason for Mr T.'s appointment? 'No.'

PS: Mr and Mrs Thatcher were given a most enthusiastic reception by the swashbuckling, free-enterprising management at Pitney-Bowes when they paid an official visit last year to the firm's Essex HQ.

Race mixing

Punters who fancy a flutter but are worried about frozen racecourses this winter need have no fear – help is at hand in the shape of racing from South Africa's sunny Transvaal. Last winter the bookies lost massive sums of money as frost cancelled race after race. Now, however, following a request from the Betting Office Licensees' Association, Extel are to run a full service, including live commentaries on two lunchtime South African races every Wednesday and Saturday until the end of next March; and if British racing is cancelled the South African coverage will rise to six races a day. Ladbrokes, who have 1260 betting shops in Britain, were reportedly the most keen to have this service. They have produced an 18-page booklet to introduce punters to the South African racing scene, including helpful information on trainers, courses and jockeys. In the introduction they say that this year 'racing will still be on even if the snow is six feet deep'. So that's all right then.

These leaks must stop

Arthur Lewis, the eccentric Labour MP for Newham North-West, who failed to win reselection last month, has persuaded Labour's National Executive not to endorse the new candidate, Tony Banks, until they have conducted an inquiry into 'alleged irregularities'. This is despite the fact that Bill Jones, a senior and respected official of the London Labour Party, has assured Labour's national agent that he supervised the reselection and 'it was all in order'. Lewis's allegations were contained in a paper he sent to last Wednesday's meeting of the NEC, but it is difficult to see quite what he is alleging, even after several readings. Here is a sample of the Lewis style: 'Regarding these various complaints as mentioned above on the original non-proceeded with no Solution Conference, although I was not so informed, the local newspaper had statements given to them of all of my complaints, with a declaration that none were in order although the original arrangements would be amended, which of course actually happened.' Eh? In a separate letter sent to Labour's national agent, Lewis complains bitterly about leaks to the press, adding: 'Perhaps I should advise you that I intend to (or am giving consideration to) arranging a By Election and see whether this is given to the press?' Afraid so, Arthur.

Double Dutch

Last weekend's conference of CND (see p.10) prompted two long smear-stories in the *Daily Telegraph* suggesting that the peace movement was in the pocket of the KGB. The *Telegraph* quoted claims by Joseph Luns, NATO's secretary-general, that the Soviet Union spends £6 million a year subsidising Western European peace campaigns. Luns, formerly a right-wing Dutch foreign minister, says that his evidence comes from 'some recent reports by secret services'. But in fact it comes from the right-wing Dutch paper *De Telegraaf* (no relation) which has been publishing leaks from officials of BVD, the Dutch internal security service. These have now been effectively demolished in Luns's native Holland by former home minister Ed van Thijn, who has revealed that the BVD report on which the leaks were based gives no support to Luns's claim. The BVD is still desperately trying to find evidence of Soviet financing, by planting informers in the Dutch peace movement. Two months ago, long after a promise by the previous government that these activities would stop, another BVD infiltration attempt was exposed.

Round Britain Trot

Struggling members of the Socialist Workers' Party (short of new members and cash) were delighted that guru Tony Cliff was able to go on an extensive speaking tour last month: Falkirk on the 17th, Glasgow the next day, down to London on the 20th, Aberdeen on the 23rd, back to LSE on the 24th, Newcastle that night, Lancaster for lunch on the 25th, Middlesbrough that evening, and so on until British Rail coffee destroyed his inner spirit. How could the SWP afford all this? The answer will probably lead to a change in Speakers' Lists for many an impoverished organisation; for Tony Cliff has just turned 65 and thus qualified for the Pensioners' £3 rail concession throughout November.

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Checking the checkers

CLAIMANTS' groups which leafletted benefit offices which were testing the new UB671 form had a very significant impact. A report by the Department of Employment on a pilot scheme which they ran between 11 January and 8 April this year shows that 83 per cent of the people who refused to fill in the form came from three benefit offices where claimants groups had sustained a leaflet campaign during the pilot scheme. Department of Employment Minister Hugh Rossi later attacked this 'interference in the smooth running of offices' by politically-motivated people.

The form UB671 was introduced on 18 October this year when, following a Rayner Report recommendation, new claimants no longer had to register at Job Centres before they could claim benefit. The testing of a claimant's availability had previously been an informal matter carried out by Job Centre staff. Now anyone who says s/he cannot take any full-time job that is offered has to fill in form UB671 which asks, among other things, about the arrangements a claimant will make for the care of the dependants. (Pressure from Joan Lestor MP caused this wording to be modified, the report reveals.) A spokesman for the DE said the form implied no change at all in policy as the law had always meant a person should be at home every day to receive letters offering jobs and ready to take up the job the very next day. This is despite the fact that initial available testing was in theory moved from Job Centres, because so few of the 3½ million people unemployed are offered jobs through official channels.

The pilot scheme found that 'initial doubts about a person's availability are at least 5 times more likely to be picked up by a written test at the Benefit Office than by registering at the Job Centre'. A spokesman from the DE said this week that some Job Centre staff were rather 'lax' about testing availability for work.

During the Pilot Scheme, which was run at 80 Benefit Offices, 39,000 people claimed benefit. Of these 1,041 were asked to fill in form UB671. At the end of further questioning and form examination 36 people out of the total 39,000 (0.09 per cent) were eventually disqualified from receiving benefit. Nineteen of these were women and 17 were men, though many more men than women claim unemployment benefit.

The Department of Employment strenuously denied that it might be a waste of public money and an unnecessary cause of distress to administer a form which weeds out 0.09 per cent of claimants as ineligible. A spokesman said the new form had saved 1,300 jobs at the MSC and 50 at the Department of Employment and did not require any extra staff time – although benefit managers had to be circulated in September with a 67 paragraph guide on the complexities of the new procedure.

The report on the survey accepts that the tiny proportion who are

disqualified is an accurate figure 'and a considerable improvement on the previous practice', i.e. where lax Job Centre staff found very few. As claimants filling in form UB671 whose National Insurance numbers end with the digit 1 are now being referred to the supervisor for 'routine supervision', it appears that the DE is more concerned with stamping out growing humanity among its staff than with detecting scroungers in heavy disguise.

Sarah Benton

MoD threat to Scottish peninsula

THE MINISTRY of Defence confirmed this week that it is surveying the 50,000 acre Knoydart estate in the Scottish West Highlands with a view to purchasing it as an army training area. Knoydart, at present owned by Major Nigel Chamberlayne-Macdonald and on the market at £1.95 million, is one of the remotest parts of the country with no road access.

If the MoD takes it over it will, at a stroke, double its land-holding in Scotland and give itself an additional playground half the size of Salisbury Plain. The Knoydart peninsula has a 30-mile coastline. The MoD says that it could be used for rifle and mortar training and landings. There is scepticism about its assurances that no heavy weaponry would be used there and that it would be a summer-only operation. Why pay £2 million for a desolate chunk of the Highlands and then not use it to the full in the most testing conditions?

If the MoD buys Knoydart it will be a major addition to its ever-expanding presence in the West Highlands and Islands. Just round the corner in the Inner Sound of Raasay there is the main British torpedo testing range, while the Outer Hebrides positively bristle with military installations. Long-standing fears that the MoD will not be happy until it has the whole area tied up ensure that its Knoydart plans will meet with considerable opposition, though only 60 people live on the peninsula.

Another potential buyer is a trust which journalist and environmentalist Chris Brasher hopes to put together. He said that work on the scheme had been going on for the past year, and the MoD interest has taken him by surprise. 'I didn't know they were flush with money. Their use of land is under severe criticism in other parts of Great Britain.' He added that if the National Land Fund, established by Hugh Dalton, had not been taken by the Treasury it would be in a position to buy up estates like Knoydart as they came on the market. The area is extremely highly valued by climbers and walkers, who fear that MoD ownership would exclude them, as it has in many other country areas.

Knoydart has had an unhappy history. It was, in the mid-1800s, the scene of some of the most ruthless clearances witnessed in the Highlands. The few people who remained hid in caves and hovels, but when they dared to build new dwellings these too were destroyed by the landowner, Macdonnel of Glengarry. With the population virtually wiped out, Knoydart developed into a highly-prized sporting paradise which, in the 1930s, fell into the hands of the pro-Nazi Lord Brocket. His hostility to local people's demands for land led, in 1948, to land raids which became a national *cause célèbre*. But eventually the Court of Session granted indefinite interdict forbidding trespass upon the Brocket estate.

Knoydart, like so many parts of the Highlands and Islands, is effectively a private kingdom cut off from the outside world. When Major Chamberlayne-Macdonald put Knoydart on the market he described it as 'a very happy little community that just wants to be left alone'. The MoD would surely put paid to that hope.

Brian Wilson

Local election results

The LIBs' Tally

Date	Place	LIB Vote	LIB %	Result
21/10	Essex*	827	24.9	Lab hold
21/10	Fareham*	284	27.6	Con hold
28/10	Macclesfield*	671	36.4	Con hold
28/10	Blackburn	370	27.4	Lab hold
28/10	Newcastle*	609	24.1	Lab hold
28/10	Craven	283	36.7	Con hold
4/11	Milton Keynes*	532	34.1	Lab hold
4/11	Fife*	869	34.5	LIB gain (Con)
4/11	W. Oxfordshire*	119	21.8	Ind hold
4/11	Rushcliffe*	328	25.0	Lab hold
4/11	Chester le Street*	581	36.9	Lab hold
11/11	Cumbria	584	36.2	Con hold
11/11	Kingston*	1202	44.3	Con hold
11/11	Gloucester*	591	23.0	Lab hold
18/11	Borders	393	41.1	Ind gain (Lib)
18/11	Wyre Forest*	1059	47.3	LIB hold
18/11	Warwickshire*	1265	44.8	Con gain (LIB)
25/11	Ribble Valley*	230	34.0	Con gain (Ind)
25/11	Kent*	787	23.4	Con hold
25/11	W. Midlands*	1887	19.1	Lab hold
25/11	Warwick*	834	47.8	LIB hold
25/11	Alyn & Deeside	286	51.2	LIB gain (Con)
25/11	Langbaurgh	129	14.1	Lab hold

The SDP Tally

Date	Place	SDP Vote	SDP %	Result
14/10	Walsall*	715	27.6	Lab hold
14/10	Midlothian*	314	21.6	Lab hold
14/10	Sedgefield	338	31.2	Lab gain (Ind)
21/10	Tayside*	317	12.1	Con hold
21/10	Cleveland*	954	33.9	Con hold
28/10	Macclesfield	770	41.3	Con hold
28/10	Suffolk*	382	16.0	Con hold
28/10	Notts*	692	20.5	Lab hold
28/10	Gedling	212	30.1	Con gain (Ind)
28/10	Solihull*	976	36.6	Con hold
28/10	St Albans*	546	27.1	Lab hold
4/11	Rushcliffe*	265	32.8	Con hold
11/11	Tendring*	245	26.5	Lab gain (LIB)
11/11	Sunderland*	406	25.6	Lab hold
11/11	Dundee*	76	5.9	Lab hold
18/11	Sunderland*	225	11.9	Lab hold
18/11	Burnley*	240	41.9	Con hold
18/11	Warwickshire*	726	25.9	Con hold
25/11	Renfrew*	152	14.3	Ind gain Lab
25/11	Kirkcaldy*	209	31.9	Con gain (Ind)

** seats also contested by both Con and Lab.*

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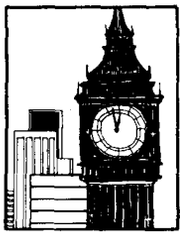

PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

Have the polls really got the Alliance wrong?

'OPINION POLLS consistently underestimate support for the Liberal/SDP Alliance: discuss.'

And discuss it they do, with SDP leaders and pollsters at each others' throats. It has been fun to watch, if you like that sort of thing; but now the debate has reached the correspondence page of *The Times* and the weekly column written by Adam ('where would the SDP be without me?') Raphael of the *Observer*. The whole argument threatens to get out of hand. It is time to set things straight.

In fact, it is all quite simple. Well-conducted polls get what they measure right; but what they measure in national surveys is public opinion unaffected by election campaigning. What parliamentary and local government by-elections measure is support for each party *after* campaigning has taken place. Polls themselves have often picked up the 'campaign' effect: in the three by-elections won by the Alliance (Croydon, Crosby and Hillhead), MORI's eve-of-election surveys showed clear gains in Alliance support – and in all three cases MORI's final projection of Alliance support was within one per cent of the actual result.

Our surveys of local government by-elections this year neatly fit this pattern. In such elections there is more local publicity for the Alliance than there is nationally at the moment, but it is usually less intense than in a parliamentary by-election. And, hey presto, our October/November measure of Alliance support (27 per cent) falls mid-way between the opinion polls' measure (23 per cent) and the parliamentary by-election measure (31 per cent) over the same period.

This time last year all three measures told the same story – support for the Alliance stood at around 44 per cent. What has happened since then is that, by each of the measures, support has fallen – but at different rates.

The divergence has been particularly marked since the Falklands crisis. Both Gallup and MORI have reported the Conservative Party having more than 40 per cent support each month since May; at its peak, Tory support in the polls was higher than its 1979 general election share of 45 per cent. According to the polls, it is the Alliance that has suffered most. Its support had already fallen ten points from its peak last winter, before the Falklands crisis began; its support has fallen another ten points since.

Our surveys of local by-elections tell a slightly different story. Support for the Conservatives has consistently been five to eight points below the party's opinion poll rating, while the Alliance has been doing four to five points better, and Labour one or two points better than in the polls.

Seat-by-seat details of recent results are given on the facing page. Almost 70,000 votes have been cast in three-cornered contests in the past six weeks. The figures are:

Conservative	24,446	35.0%
Labour	24,360	34.9%
Alliance	19,086	27.3%
Others	1,979	2.8%

Those figures slightly flatter Labour and understate Tory support, because of the pattern of seats that have fallen vacant. My estimate of national support implied by our figures is: Conservatives 37 per cent, Labour 34, Alliance 27. Compared with our figures for September and early October, this represents a two per cent swing from Conservative to Labour, with Alliance support remaining stationary.

THESE FIGURES suggest that the 'Thatcher factor' (or however you describe the lingering support for the Tories five months after the end of the Falklands war) is less evident in real votes than in opinion polls. This does not necessarily mean the opinion polls are 'wrong' – rather, that some of the Tories' present supporters have only a weak commitment to the party, and don't turn out to vote in by-elections. The difference between the Tories' by-election rating and their opinion poll rating represents, as it were, Mrs Thatcher's soft under-belly – voters whose allegiance in a general election held now could go either way.

For the Alliance, 27 per cent is well below the critical breakthrough point. In the past six weeks, it has won only one in eleven local authority by-elections – four out of 44 – and all those have gone to the Liberals. The SDP has not won a single such seat since late September, and only two out of 53 it has fought since Roy Jenkins became the party's leader.

Since July the pattern of seats won and lost is:

	Seats defended	Seats lost	Seats gained	Seats held now
Con	58	13	14	59
Lab	59	10	7	56
Lib	18	8	12	22
SDP	–	–	2	2
Others	13	7	3	9

As can be seen, Labour has done almost as well as the Conservatives, while the Alliance has made a net gain of only six in the 148 contests that have taken place in the past five months. In the same period last year the Alliance gained no fewer than 77 seats.

Projecting the array of polling and by-election data to a general election is a hazardous business. Naturally the Alliance claims that parliamentary by-elections provide the most reliable guide, for they replicate most closely the intensity of a general election campaign.

Past figures for mid-term Liberal revivals tell a different story. Then, too, Liberal candidates in parliamentary by-elections often out-performed the party's national poll rating. Come the following general election, it was the opinion polls that provided the best guide. In the months before both the 1964 and 1974 general elections much the same thing occurred: Liberal support fell away before the campaigns started, and then partially recovered during the campaigns themselves. (David Steel often proclaims the second half of that process as his reason for optimism for the Alliance at the next election; he tends, though, to ignore the first half.)

Thus, between July and November 1973 – at roughly the same point in the life of the Heath government as during the past five months – the Liberals averaged 40 per cent in parliamentary by-elections, and 23 per cent in Gallup's monthly opinion polls. By the beginning of the February 1974 general election campaign, the Liberals were down to 11 per cent; they then recovered to 20 per cent by polling day. In retrospect, it is clear that the Liberals in those days (a) picked up support during election campaigns; but (b) picked up more support in by-election campaigns than during the general election that followed.

One difference this time, we are told, is that the Alliance is operating at a higher level of initial support than the Liberals nine years ago. Last month that ceased to be true. Gallup's November total for the Alliance was 21½ per cent. In November 1973 the Liberals on their own had 22½ per cent. It may well be true that the Alliance will start the next election campaign with more than 11 per cent support; and that it may then gain further ground. But there is no evidence that the Alliance has recently been gaining support (as Shirley Williams claimed in a Granada TV interview this week) and no reason to fire abuse at the pollsters. If the SDP's leaders believe what they say about the polls, they are deceiving themselves; and if they don't, they are deceiving the public. □

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Ravenscraig: last nail in the coffin?

Patrick Wintour examines the fatalism that has marked the relentless rise of unemployment in Scotland and asks whether the mood of the unions may just be changing

IN 1971, faced with the sit-in at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders and with unemployment in Scotland standing at 120,000, the then Chief Constable of Glasgow, David McNee, telegraphed to the Prime Minister, Edward Heath, his judgment that he could no longer guarantee public order in the greater Glasgow area. The instant result was that the Heath government did its celebrated economic U-turn and abandoned its declared policy of not supporting 'lame ducks'.

Last month 350,000 people were registered as out of work in Scotland (14.7 per cent of the working population on a seasonally adjusted basis). In the huge Strathclyde region itself, unemployment is now running at 18 per cent. According to the Regional Council, 60 per cent of 16 to 18-year-olds are either unemployed, or on a temporary work scheme. Yet, in the face of these catastrophic unemployment figures, a kind of eerie political silence still lies over the west of Scotland.

Since Mrs Thatcher came to power in 1979 over 100,000 manufacturing jobs have been eliminated in Scotland – some 17 per cent of the total. Singers, the smelter at Invergordon, the Linwood car factory, Leyland's plant at Bathgate, BSP at East Kilbride, Dunlop Tyres in Renfrewshire – these have been some of the major industrial redundancies.

Last week the Fraser Allander Institute, which operates a model of the Scottish economy, predicted that unemployment overall in Scotland would reach over 17 per cent in 1986. Even this forecast would not be altered if the Scottish economy was to 'return to its historic pre-recession growth rate'.

All the opposition political parties in Scotland – Labour, Communist, the official Scottish Nationalist Party and its breakaway SNP '79 – have long predicted that a point would be reached when the labour movement in Scotland would react substantially against this steady trend. The spate of sit-ins in 1981 – notably at Bathgate, Plessey and Lee Jeans were represented as evidence of an industrial counter-attack.

But in these sit-ins, particularly at Lee Jeans, the workforce does not seem to have been typical for Scotland. They have tended to be young and without many years' service, thus not putting relatively high redundancy payments at risk by taking industrial action.

In the heartlands of the Scottish labour movement a familiar pattern has persisted through 1980 and 1981, of vocal resistance to closures by shop stewards committees followed by cave-ins at subsequent crucial mass meetings. Eighteen months ago at the Talbot car factory in Linwood to the west of Glasgow, the management simply said they would cut off redundancy pay if the workers sat in. The workers voted two to one to accept redundancy, despite promises of support throughout the Scottish labour movement if they decided to fight the closure.

The Clydebridge steel rolling mill which closed a fortnight ago was a similar story. The management demanded closure or else they threatened to withhold BSC's normal severance payments. The shop stewards had to call a mass meeting on this issue and lost the vote ten to one.

'We campaigned from August to October, but in the end the works manager sent a letter to everyone's homes saying they might lose their severance money unless they co-operated. Workers with 20 years' service knew they could walk out with £15,000, the younger ones with £7,000 . . . We call the severance pay the animal. In a sense it's true what BSC say. No steelworker has been forced to make a money deal. They've all been signed voluntarily.'

Harry Harold
Clydebridge shop steward

The Scottish divisional ISTC official, a Welshman, Clive Lewis, puts it thus:

> I don't blame those men. *I've* got every sin but gambling and those workers would have been gambling if they had occupied the mill. But at the same time I have been thinking about democracy. In a sense those jobs were not theirs to sell. It means suppliers to Clydebridge will close, it means shops in the area will close, it means more years on the dole for the kids in the areas. Those people did not have a vote. They were not part of the franchise, but it's their death sentence just as much as the steelworkers'.

BUT THE MOOD in the Scottish labour movement may be changing. If it does, the reason may well be the threatened closure of the Ravenscraig steel works in Motherwell. In the current recession and revision of the BSC corporate plan, Ravenscraig has been repeatedly mentioned as the most likely candidate for the chop among the BSC's five major plants. It is said that its transport costs from the Hunterstone terminal are too high, that only 10 per cent of its output goes to Scottish markets and that its loss of local markets, such as Linwood, has left the plant hopelessly isolated. Above all the three bulk producers in the strip group – the 'Craig, Llanwern and Port Talbot – together have a capacity of 6m tonnes per annum, double the projected demand. Persistent leaks suggest that the 'Craig will not be closed, at least this side of an election. The stewards' greatest concern, however, is that the plant will instead be partially closed with one of its two remaining blast furnaces being shut.

Tommy Brennan, the convenor of the shop stewards, says this would be equivalent to shutting the plant. There would never be sufficient through-put for the plant to be viable.

The closure of Ravenscraig would be a Scottish disaster. Together with its satellite works in west Scotland, its ore terminal at Hunterstone, and the Gartcosh and Dalzell mills, over 6,000 workers are directly involved. The plant further supports the jobs of 1,200 more who are employed by sub-contractors and provides the demand for two coal pits, a third of British Rail's freight traffic in Scotland and five per cent of the electricity consumed in the South of Scotland. The Scottish Development Agency believes that the closure of Ravenscraig would add an average 3 to 5 per cent to Scottish manufacturing costs and take roughly £1.5 million per week out of the local economy. Strathclyde regional council calculates that there could be a further 'knock on' job loss as high as 2,000. Two academics at Glasgow University, Nigel Meager and Mike Danson, believe the council is being conservative in its estimates.

Over 50 per cent of the plant's workers live in Motherwell, already one of the poorest areas in Western Europe. According to the 1981 census one in five in the area were already then unemployed. The figure for youth unemployment could now be 70 per cent. Mr Brennan, for instance, has a daughter with 8 'O' levels and 4 higher grades: 'She has got a job cleaning up after incontinent men in a mental hospital and she is delighted, absolutely delighted.'

The 'Craig workforce is acutely aware of the consequences of closure. Productivity has shot up. In the first quarter of this year, the plant was down to 4.45 men per tonne of liquid steel produced. This figure is half that of the previous year and compares well with the two other integrated bulk strip plants in

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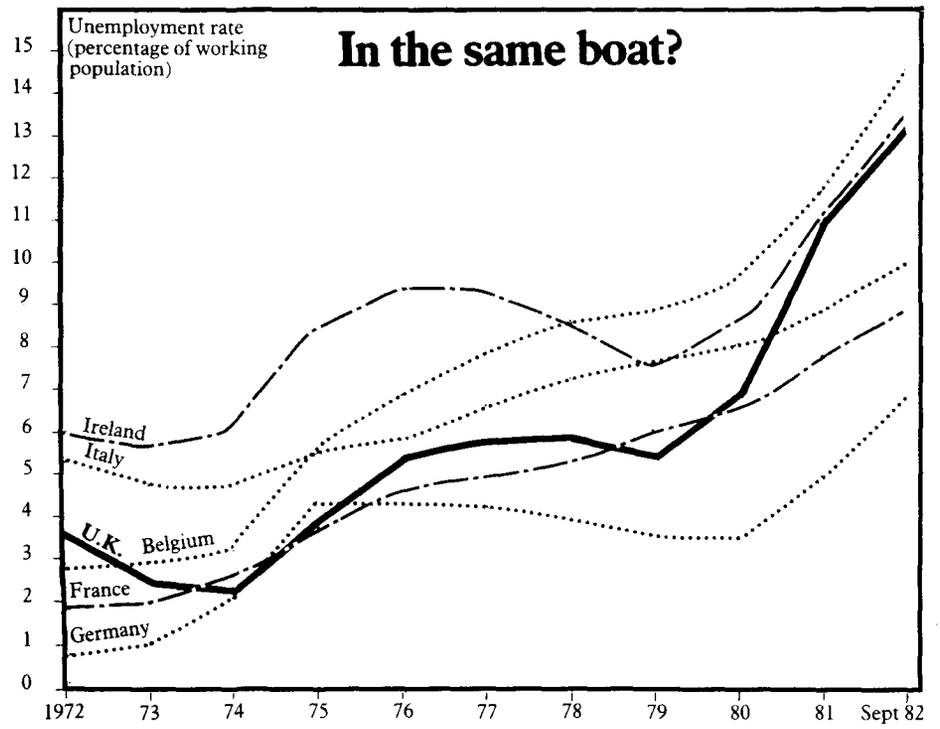

Since 1979 the United Kingdom has had the worst relative unemployment performance of any country shown above.

BSC – Llanwern and Port Talbot. Between April and July the plant was within £200,000 of making a profit. Since then there has been a collapse of orders – production fell from 40,000 tonnes per week to under 25,000. Fixed costs rose correspondingly. One of the three blast furnaces was taken out and in September production was stopped for a week.

Local shop stewards have produced a vigorous case against closure, largely based on the fact that 80 per cent of 'Craig steel is made by the 'continuous casting' process, which produces a more reliable product than the old-fashioned 'ingot' process. Llanwern has no 'concast' while Port Talbot's has only just been installed. The 'Craig also has an ability to produce high quality steels with its desulphuring and degassing equipment. Such steels are important to the oil industry. If lost, many of the Scottish fabricating yards would be threatened with closure. The stewards also deny that the plant's location makes their product uncompetitive due to distribution costs. Sixty-two per cent of its products are sold within a 250-mile radius.

Mr Brennan insists that a closure announcement at the 'Craig would produce immediate industrial action. The stewards have been leafletting the plant, pointing out that even £10,000 of redundancy payment can disappear quickly and that the DHSS can dock supplementary benefit from someone who still has £2,000 in a bank account, 12 months after receiving a redundancy pay-off.

NEVERTHELESS, the general lack of anger about unemployment from both those in and out of work is striking and puzzling. In the 1930s is it true that apathy was the rule, but there was at the same time more resistance and conflict. Allen Hutt, writing in 1933, estimated that between the formation of the national government in 1931 and December 1932 there were over 100 baton charges by the police on mass demonstrations, over 1,300 arrests and 420 convictions. Well before the Public Order Act 1936, introduced after the anti-fascist riots, the government had been sufficiently concerned to prepare emergency legislation to stop processions and effectively to drive the National Unemployed Workers Movement underground.

Glasgow, in particular, shows the contrast between now and then. In 1931, for instance, 80,000 unemployed Glaswegians fought against police armed with fire hoses. Further riots occurred the following year. But in the 1980s, public disorder has been conspicuous by its absence, even though 61,000 males were registered as unemployed in inner Glasgow in September 1982, representing 24.6 per cent of all male workers.

At a conference on TUC centres for the unemployed called by the Scottish TUC in Glasgow last weekend, there was little sign that the jobless were about to take to the barricades. Most trades councils present had found it much more difficult to organise and involve the unemployed than they had initially foreseen. Few seemed to have a clear idea of what the unemployed centres could provide or how they could attract the unemployed to them. The conference was attended by only 80 delegates. Its tone was dispiriting and fractious.

Certainly the distracting crisis inside the Labour Party must be partly responsible for this docility about unemployment. But it can hardly be a sufficient explanation. One answer may lie in the way in which the labour market operates. For most people unemployment is still a temporary phenomenon. Professor Daniel has shown in his study, *Unemployed Flow*, published by the Policy Studies Institute, that only 50 per cent of those made unemployed remain so for more than three months. For most people, unemployment is not recognised as an ordinary state: most regard it as a hiatus.

But as the recession has deepened, the number of longer-term unemployed has grown. In Scotland the number of people unemployed for more than 12 months has grown by over 80,000 in five years. Logically, these people might seem the natural focus for political disaffection. However, it is the long-term unemployed who suffer most from the psychological distress now closely associated with worklessness.

Professor Marie Jahoda (in her book *Employment and Unemployment* published this month) looks at the psychological experience of long periods of unemployment, a subject she has studied since the 1930s. She argues that there are five aspects to unemployment: 'the experience of time, the reduction of social contracts, the lack of participation in collective purposes, the absence of an acceptable status and its consequences for personal identity and the absence of regular activity'. The predominant emotions are isolation and guilt, not collective anger.

The Carnegie Trust put the point eloquently in a 30s survey of South Wales:

> The overwhelming majority of the men had no political convictions whatsoever. When asked why, they invariably replied: 'What does it matter'? . . . it was not so much a plague on all your parties as a plague on all your politics. It has perhaps been assumed too much by some that because men are unemployed, their natural state of want and discontent must express itself in some revolutionary attitude. It cannot be reiterated too often that unemployment is not an active state: its keynote is boredom, a continuous state of boredom.

The point at which protest is most likely to occur seems to be when unemployment levels in an area are just starting to rise fast. But once unemployment has spread widely and has been allowed to persist, as in Scotland, apathy and fatalism set in. Mrs Thatcher has kept her nerve and broken through this barrier. She has stuck to her guns through Labour Party mass unemployment rallies, through the People's March for Jobs, through the riots, through the Jobs Express. Now, both the Labour Party and the TUC have begun to distance themselves from any more 'unemployment marches', such as the one being planned from Scotland to London. Orwell's point in 1936 is apt:

> The people at any rate have grasped that unemployment is a thing they cannot help. It is not only Alf Smith who is out of work now; Bert Jones is out of work as well, and both of them have been out of work for years. It makes a great difference when things are the same for everybody.

That in fact things have not been the same for everybody under Thatcherism is shown by our graph. Alf has done a lot worse than his European colleagues. But in this context the facts are not important. What matters is people's perceptions.

A poll in the *Scotsman* last week showed that less than a third of Scottish people blame Mrs Thatcher for unemployment – an equal number blamed the general recession. As an act of misplaced forgiveness it is a little like the crofters exonerating the Countess of Sutherland of responsibility for the Highland clearances of the 1820s. □

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CND

Mass politics

Sarah Benton reports after Sheffield on the year ahead for CND

MORE THAN ANY single argument, the potent image of women being imprisoned because of their determination to 'do something for peace' and to do it in their own way influenced delegates to this year's CND conference in Sheffield. Speakers from any of the peace camps which now dot Britain were hugely applauded and women candidates for the Campaign's National Council who were associated with Greenham Common were almost all elected, even where they were personally unknown to delegates. Those who lost out were the voices for a more politically measured strategy. Communist Jon Bloomfield, whom a leader in *The Times* this week identified as one of the dangerous left-wing voices of the Council, had in fact already lost his seat at the weekend as had two other experienced Communist Council members.

Committed left-wingers (and other socialists also lost their seats) cannot either manipulate or 'hi-jack' the activities of CND as a movement because it is not a disciplined organisation with a uniform structure. Trotskyist or KGB agents trying to winkle their way into Greenham Common peace camp would be identified and rejected more summarily than a man in a women's sauna. For analagous reasons, there is no nationally organised 'Broad Left' (meaning Communist, Labour Party members and unaffiliated socialists) in CND; and those who would share that sort of platform had a hard time getting their resolutions passed. Of the clearly Trotskyist candidates, not one got elected – and most of their proposals were resoundingly defeated.

These included a clarion call to the labour movement to go on general strike against cruise missiles – hardly realistic when trade unions won't even strike to defend their own jobs, said one delegate drily – and a bid to commit CND to opposing all manifestations of British imperialism and military activities abroad.

CND has managed to become what every left-wing group aspires to be – a genuine mass movement, attracting people who have never been involved in politics, though their 'politics' may go no further than a revulsion against the 'madness' of the nuclear arms race. They inhabit the promised land where political rebellion merges with 'common-sense'. Some of them have been drawn into the movement by the apocalypticism which runs as a live electric wire through CND. 1983 will not be Armageddon; but it is the year scheduled for the deployment of cruise missiles on British soil. That in itself creates a nervous feeling that time is running out – especially as rumours erupt of the missiles being installed ahead of schedule in order to pre-empt a general election.

Unlike a political party with its consoling rituals, myths and disciplines, mass movements rely on an escalating series of successes, in order to sustain their morale and momentum. It is this which poses the more experienced habitués of the political world with their problem; to effect any long-term change in defence policies, CND must crystallise the vague, unformed mass hostility to cruise and Trident into a clear-cut active opposition and wade in the mucky waters of *realpolitik*. Yet 1983 is also the year of a general election, a tangible political event – and it was hardly discussed at all at the conference. Workshops on non-violent direct action (most so full that latecomers weren't admitted) far outnumbered workshops on the general election.

This dilemma was apparent in the narrowness of the majorities on two significant votes. The first was on the Project Committee's six point strategy for next year. Its most original proposal was for a peace canvass in which CND members would take to the streets with a questionnaire on nuclear missiles and bases. Equipped with this, they would have door-step discussions on the rights and wrongs of cruise and Trident missiles. 'The active process of changing opinion is more important than the passive process of collecting it,' said James Hinton (who lost his National Council seat) when proposing it. But the proposal was condemned by Rosemary Rechter of Deal and Dover as 'too grandoise and ambitious' and by Dave Withecombe, who supports *Socialist Challenge* and believes 'we need action that can stop cruise'. The proposal was only passed after a card vote.

Perhaps the difference is a matter of temperament as much as of political belief; a difference between those who want by their own direct actions to block the schemes of governments and generals; and those who think the purpose of all actions is to increase and clarify popular support for the aims of CND. While various speakers stressed that there is no conflict between canvassing for peace and civil disobedience, a survey carried out by CND of its national members (those who pay a direct subscription to CND head office) showed that, in actuality, there is. Only seven per cent of them thought 'considered non-violent illegal direct action' was the most important activity over the next 12 months and 33 per cent of them would not take part in such action - but 74 per cent of them thought CND should encourage non-violent civil disobedience.

British withdrawal from NATO produced the narrowest vote of the conference – even though E. P. Thompson received rapturous applause when he walked to the microphone to oppose the motion. But it was on issues like NATO that the conflict between the 'common sense' of a popular movement and the highly political intricacies of international peace negotiations was at its sharpest. Campaigning to get out of NATO seemed to many an obvious next step.

Arguments for proceeding less unilaterally sounded elitist, requiring the rank and file to wait patiently while delicate negotiations go on with a baffling collection of foreign peace groups. Only a few can tell the faces behind a string of sound-alike Russian names, or the missiles behind the battery of look-alike acronyms and abbreviations for nuclear hardware. Hard-line socialists lined up with those impatient of such high level dialogue to vote for the 'get-out of NATO' campaign. But, with many of the leading national members opposed to such a campaign, it is likely it will only be taken up by the Hard Left in their favourite territory of trade unions and Labour Party conferences.

CND's structure means that, whatever conference decides, local groups will still go on doing what they want to do. National Council, when it has its members from the regions and specialist groups added, will reflect less closely the interests of the conference local activists and will concentrate on what it thinks most important. The most delicate job it has to deal with is the negotiations with the Greenham Common women on how CND, with its thousands of male members, will be involved at this central site for cruise missiles. The success of the women, stemming largely from the fact that they are women and thus outside traditional political images, has intensified the pressure from many of the men to join in too. As far as many women are concerned, the connection now between maleness and violence is so ineradicable that if men 'do something' for peace it is likely to lead to war with the forces of law and order. □

On December 12 and 13 there will be a 'mass action' at Greenham Common, Newbury, in which women will circle the nine-mile perimeter of the base and men will be asked to provide support.

Women from Greenham Common: released after 14 days in jail

Pam Isherwood

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LOW PAY

Poor and getting poorer

Professor A. B. Atkinson presents new evidence of how low paid employment is growing

WITH MORE THAN 3 million unemployed, it may appear beside the point to be concerned about the low pay of those *in* work. But it is an essential feature of any socialist plan for a return to full employment that the jobs generated should not be of the low paid, dead-end kind that are still all too common. The creation of low wage jobs, on which the government appears intent, is not going to provide a satisfactory resolution of the present economic problems.

The need for measures to combat low pay is all the more important now that we can see that the recession has not only thrown people out of work, but that it has also worsened the relative position of the low paid. The table shows what has happened in recent years to the earnings of the lowest 'decile' (the level of pay below which the bottom tenth of workers find themselves), expressed as a percentage of the pay median (the middle point in the earnings parade). In April 1977, this figure for men was 68.1 per cent; by April 1981 it had fallen to 65.6 per cent; and the most recently released figures show that in April 1982 it had fallen still further to 64.5 per cent. Put another way, if the definition of low pay is fixed as a percentage of median pay, the *absolute* number of low paid men has actually increased – despite the fall in total employment. For women, the position improved from 1977 to 1979, but the low paid have lost ground steadily in the past three years.

The case for putting low pay prominently on the agenda has been forcefully argued by the Low Pay Unit. For the purpose of its campaign, the Unit has drawn heavily on the New Earnings Survey (NES) information (used in the table). This Survey, which was originated in 1968, is a most valuable source and has played an important role in establishing the extent of pay inequalities. But it only gives part of the picture. In particular, it tells us nothing about the family circumstances of the low paid. It is therefore all too easy for the problem to be dismissed on the grounds that the low paid are largely second earners in the family, or single people with no dependents. The SDP claimed last month, for instance, that 'a higher minimum wage would mainly benefit working wives and single people' (*Attacking Poverty*, Green Paper II).

The SDP's claim is not based on any evidence. However, a source of evidence does exist – the annual Family Expenditure Survey (FES) – and this has been examined in a recent research study at LSE by John Micklewright, Holly Sutherland and myself*. The FES is much smaller in scale that the NES, which means that it cannot be expected to be as reliable in all respects, and the data are not available so quickly (our evidence relates to 1977). But it does contain information on family circumstances. It therefore seemed important to see what the FES tells us about low pay.

Earnings at lowest decile as percentage of the median (all full-time men aged 21 and over, and women aged 18 and over, pay not affected by absence)

	MEN	WOMEN
April 1977	68.1	68.6
April 1978	66.8	69.1
April 1979	66.0	69.4
April 1980	65.9	68.4
April 1981	65.6	68.0
April 1982	64.5	66.9

Source: New Earnings Survey 1981 and 1982, Tables 1 and 15.

The overall picture of low pay derived from the FES is broadly similar to that found in the NES; although, taking the lowest 'decile' for adult men in the NES as the standard for 'low pay', we find that the number of low paid measured by the FES was nearly one-fifth higher. If one includes, as we do, workers aged 18-20, then the NES exaggerates the scale of the problem.

The evidence from the FES also confirms that low pay is not confined to a few industries, or particular areas of the country. Although there are certain regions with a high incidence (for example, Northern Ireland with 24 per cent for men), and certain industries (the figure for agriculture, for instance, was 50 per cent), these only accounted for a minority of the low paid. Nearly a quarter of the low paid lived in London and the South-East. Farm workers only represented one in 20 of low paid men.

What of their family circumstances? It is true that over a half (54 per cent) of the male low paid were single non-householders without children. Similarly, nearly a half (49 per cent) of low paid women were married with a husband in work. This, however, still leaves a large number with family responsibilities. Two out of every five low paid men were married and head of a household. A quarter – or more than half a million men altogether – had to support either dependent children, or a non-working wife, or both. A further half a million low paid women headed a household, or supported dependents. Together, there were more than a million low paid 'bread-winners'.

Our findings suggest therefore that low pay *is* relevant to the determination of family incomes. The problem cannot be dismissed simply on the grounds that the low paid can rely on other sources of support. Nor can one argue that the solution is provided by the present system of family benefits. Quite a number of the low paid with children would have been eligible for Family Income Supplement, but the government's own study based on the Family Finances Survey showed that take-up in 1978/9 was only around 50 per cent. The holes in the safety net are gaping.

Our research on low pay has evident implications for policy, but it also illustrates the key role played by the availability of statistical evidence. Without the NES, the Low Pay Unit and others would have found it much harder to establish their case. Without the household surveys, it would be difficult to dispel the myths which surround the subject of low pay. □

Low Pay: A Preliminary Look at the Evidence from the Family Expenditure Survey, by A. B. Atkinson, J. Micklewright and H. Sutherland, research supported by the SSRC Programme on Taxation, Incentives and the Distribution of Income: to be published this week by the Low Pay Unit, 9 Poland St., London W1, £1.20 incl. p&p.

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THIS ENGLAND

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☐ The campaign to get brain-damaging lead out of petrol and the air is just another fashionable fad, taking over from the anti-smoking lobby, a district councillor has claimed. 'It is just a scare, something to occupy people's minds after the smoking issue. Next week it could be silk stockings,' claimed Mr Peter Paterson at South Oxfordshire environmental health committee. He said that previous generations of children played constantly with lead toys, were surrounded by lead paint and had lead water pipes. 'We virtually ate lead,' he said, 'but we still managed to win two world wars.' – *Oxford Mail* (A.Summers)

☐ In the event of a nuclear war, we would have to forget about the rest of the county and concern ourselves with survival in Bridport, the mayor Mr Harry Summers said this week. And to get food and medical supplies, he said: 'We will break into Fine Fare and we will go into Tesco's and we will survive.' – *Bridport News* (M. Bartram)

☐ Plate of the Year records the Task Force and the highlights of the conflict along with Laker, Grace Kelly, Sierra, Mary Rose, ET, Scargill illustrated with supporting text on one 10½-inch bone china plate. – Ad. in *Guardian* (David Hutchinson)

☐ While Baker conceded that jobs will be lost in manufacturing, he was confident that other industries, especially leisure, will expand, with extra jobs in new areas 'such as windsurfing'. – *Computer Weekly* (Fred Silberman)

☐ A Tory MP called on the government yesterday to make awards to police horses in recognition of their service to the public. – *Guardian* (Pete Georghiades & Mandie Osborne)

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Labour and the trades unions

What should be the future relationship between Labour as a political party and the trades union movement which gave birth to it in the first place? Without them Labour will not understand working-class consciousness, argues Paul Corrigan

IN October the *New Statesman* carried an apocalyptic article by David Selbourne of Ruskin College about the relationship between Labour and the class it has always claimed to represent. It raised real strategic questions for our future and debunked certain visions of the ultra-left. But his answers also contained naive and wondrous visions.

It is true that the notions of left/right divisions in the Labour Party have become a lot less easy to discern. Many people on the Left in the Labour Party are only just coming out of a long moral nightmare, where they were terrified to be accused of 'selling out', of 'being right wing'. The litmus tests reproduced by the moral arbiters of the Left caused many people simply to shut up, rather than dare to question. Over and over again in the last three years we have had the unedifying sight of a small number of recent recruits to the Labour Party emerging from a caucus to pronounce the 'truth' and the 'line' on everything. Any divergence from this line has been attacked as either a failure of nerve, or failing the working class (a section of the population who are never in the caucus room).

In this period, many Constituency Labour Parties have not been very pleasant places. The fanatics of a petit bourgeois cultural revolution have turned them into self-criticism sessions for anyone who said anything but 'I agree'. Time and again we have been mystified why articulate powerful people have failed to call the new moralists' bluff. For, while they behave as if they are backed by a powerful and vengeful workers' army which will condemn to oblivion all opposition, they are in fact denim clad paper tigers. It is true that they have developed some elemental capacity for organisation, but the Labour Party itself has in this period been so disorganised that a group of well-trained choristers could have gained four or five places on the NEC.

Two important factors emerge from this. First, it is crucially important for political people not to mind what they are called in the middle of a struggle. Put simply, just because seven people in Islington decide that something is left-wing, it is not necessarily so. History and the working class as a whole will decide what is and what is not left-wing or socialist. That is a process which takes more time than many of these people will spend in organised politics.

Secondly, it must be recognised that some constituencies in the Labour Party are at the moment so weak and enfeebled as organisations that groups from the right, left or anywhere can use them as vehicles. This is not simply caused by 'sell outs' of Labour Governments of the past, but is much more the fault of local Labour parties' lack of openness to the culture of working people, both organised and unorganised.

This is absolutely not an argument for a split between the trades union movement and the Labour Party. For the trade union movement has proved itself much more difficult to 'take over' than Labour parties. This is an issue which is not simply a battle about the recent tactical struggle with the ultra-left, but is about the nature of trades union structure.

British working-class culture in the early 1980s is *not* highly political. Working class people are not only *not* joining the Labour Party, but they are not taking part in political organisations in anything like the strength that they were during the last depression. Equally at the moment they are not all active in community or trades unions. Consequently, against this background we must judge the importance and relevance of working-class organisations *not* against the possibility of a five million strong mass socialist party, but against the reality of what is there. That means that while the trade union movement may contain political reaction, cultural inertia or bureaucracy, it also contains – block votes or no – a greater element of democracy than any other organisation within working-class life. The link that people have with their unions may not be active, but when a shop steward or a full-time official needs to call people into action they have to invoke their members.

Now it may be true that this involvement does not lead to support for the kind of 'socialist' policies that some radicals might like. But politics is not simply a matter of finding people who agree and forming an organisational structure around that agreement. That is a recipe for dinner parties, not political struggle. Political organisations need to have relationships with the classes that they hope to represent and move. The Labour Party without the trades union movement would, at the moment only have such a relationship through electoral politics and the odd campaign and not in the organisations where people live and work.

It is here that the ultra-left has now also joined the criticism of the trade union link. For in recent months they have come to dislike the way in which the trades union movement, as part of the Labour Party, has failed to agree with them. Within the Women's Conference of the Labour Party attacks upon the trade union involvement were common. Around the necessity for agreement on the correct feminist line, a whole section of females were to be disenfranchised. In the recent NEC elections, those who had been organising around 'slates' for the constituency section were hit by a whole roof full organised on the trades union side.

Certainly trade unions are often bureaucratic, rather than democratic. But they do contain more democratic involvement of more working-class people than any other experience. For the Bennites the most obvious example of this came last year with the NUPE vote in the deputy leadership struggle. The union characterised most consistently as 'left-wing' carried out a ballot which preferred Healey over Benn. A different vote by NUPE members would have changed the face of the Labour Party. This is not to say that democracy will always move everything to the right; it is to say that the organisational link between the trades union movement and the Labour Party ensures that more working class people have to be involved in any change.

Crucially, the failure of the ultra-left has been to develop any theory or practice for understanding working-class consciousness. It is the role of socialist parties to listen much more carefully and attentively to working people and then to set about the task of moving with them to a different future. Without the trade unions, the Labour Party will never achieve this. □

Paul Corrigan is Head of the Department of Applied Social Studies at the North London Polytechnic.

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DIARY

Christopher Price

I'm pleased that *The Times*'s attempt to float Michael Foot's removal fizzled out. He'd had a terrible seven days: Tatchell, Militant, boundaries, reshuffles – he couldn't get anything right. But, in the event, we had nothing more than Hugo Young fantasising in the *Sunday Times* about Denis Healey taking over just before a general election, and Marcia Williams in the *Mail on Sunday* about Eric Varley as our future leader. The story died because every political pundit knew that for better for worse, in sickness and in health, to have and to hold, Michael Foot and the Labour leadership are wedded – unless and until the next general election doth them part. But the real strength of his incumbency stems neither from his zeal for the job nor our cumbersome, democratic arrangements for electing his successor. It lies in the environmental logic of Labour in Britain today: with the activists firmly Left, and the NEC/shadow cabinet firmly Right, Michael is plainly the best prime minister we've got. Besides, the union leaders persuaded him to stand in the first place; they can hardly ditch him now.

○

But logic is one thing, charisma quite another. The problem of shifting the Party up ten full points in the opinion polls remains as intractable as ever, the more depressingly so because every MP's surgery reflects a quite unprecedented level of social frustration and suffering. This weekend, cases came to me in this order. *Incipient racism:* a charming 12-year-old black about to be thrown out of his voluntary secondary school for writing 'cunt' in another boy's exercise book in response to racial provocation. The first 'offence', as far as his mother knew. *Heseltine's housing clampdown:* A mother about to lose a child in care to adoption and oblivion, because she couldn't get a transfer near her family where she'd get sufficient support. A 15-year-old black boy, stuck since birth with a bunk bed in a box room in a tiny damp flat, whose parents were pleading to be moved so he could have a chance of studying for 'O' level. (He won't get one.) A couple in their eighties, one dying of cancer, both crippled with arthritis, without proper house heating, desperate for a purpose built, centrally heated flat. (I can't bring myself to tell them that Heseltine's policies have forced my borough to exclude the terminally ill from the highest housing priority – to give some chance to those who may live.)

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Meanwhile in the City, just five miles away, the rich get richer. Especially in insurance and reinsurance. It is astounding how little fuss the Alexander Howden and Minet affairs have generated at Westminster. If they were trade union or Labour local government scandals, the affronted Tory howls would be on every tabloid front page. With the City, Labour seems somehow unable to put in the boot. Just as the Bank of England lifeboat drew a veil over Slater Walker, no doubt a 'chief executive' will soon be appointed to cosmeticise Lloyds: to put a cleaner face on that seedy gang of upper-class bookmakers so many of whom infest the House of Commons. The affair is just another reminder that we live in an evil, unfair society and that Labour has hardly begun to kindle that righteous indignation which should be setting politics ablaze.

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This is why Michael's greatest failure is over the shadow cabinet. True, the present incumbents are all estimable folk, who say all the right things in those Commons debates to which they are assigned. It's just that some say them immensely better than others, and in a general election year, it is the passion and conviction with which you say things that forms the watershed between victory and defeat. But Michael should not despair. He's lost a battle at the hands of the PLP Right, but he's still in charge of the war. Just as the Prime Minister can shuffle *her* cabinet whenever she wishes, so can he his. The balance of patronage and democracy which now represents the constitution of the PLP only properly works if both are exercised ruthlessly. The Right has always operated PLP democracy in this fashion: towards the spring Michael should display a little of that patronage-ruthlessness which

he failed to apply last week and shuffle the pack, both to assert his own authority and to put more punch into the articulation of Labour policy as the election approaches.

○

The Tories have always had the edge in ruthlessness. There is no better reminder than the true story that is now emerging of the death of Stephen Ward. I remember absorbing the final stages of the Profumo affair on a Cornwall summer holiday nearly 30 years ago, and then reading Wayland Young's excellent book on the background to it all: *A Study in Conservatism*. Even then Ward's death seemed all too pat. Now we know that some few members, at least, of our right-wing establishment hired him as a spy, and then watched him chosen by their colleagues as a scapegoat and coldbloodedly sent to his trial and death – all in the cause of saving Britain for Conservatism. In retrospect it was all an object lesson in the ruthlessness of the Right. Labour would never wish to match that particular quality of fanaticism; but our anger at the ills of society and passion for a better world used to run quite as deep. Michael's most important task as leader now is to help re-awaken those emotions both in his close colleagues and in the Party at large.

○

In short he must do for Labour what Alan Mullery is trying to do for the fans at Crystal Palace. Alan's making real progress. Though we lost to Wolves on Saturday, it was the best match I've ever seen at Selhurst Park, with seven goals, two of them unbelievable. The 'Eagles' shout is beginning to get some body in it again. It also raises me in the eyes (or rather the ears) of my two-year-old grandson who attributes the totality of the shouting to me and my younger son, who visit him for tea after the match. He seems to think football is some sort of political festivity. 'Car Park (he's not yet mastered Grandpa), Michael, Shout' he repeats in bemused admiration. I think he'll make a politician one day.

ROGER WODDIS

Moving on

Alas, they are folded,
The tents of the past,
The home we were born in
Has shifted at last.
The spirit that moved us
And kept the world sane
Has gone from Great Turnstile
To Farringdon Lane.

Farewell, the brave music
When Kingsley was king
And all of our winters
Were followed by spring.
The future still beckons,
Though partially closed
And somewhat more distant
Than we had supposed.

For those who imagine
The earth is at rest,
A change from old habits
Is all for the best –
A thought Galileo
Would doubtless approve:
Eppur si muove –
And yet it does move.

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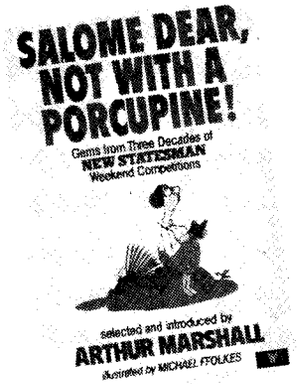
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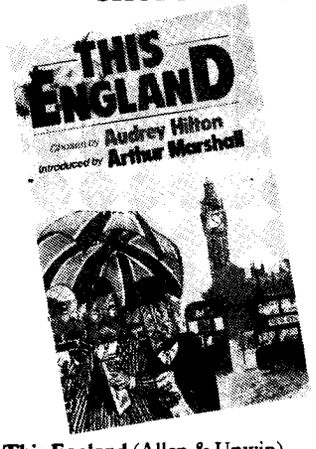

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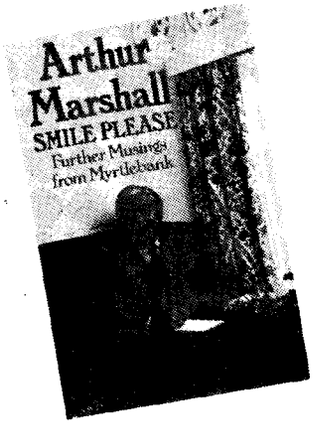

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Refugees under attack

Nicholas Bell, a member of the European co-operative Longo Mai, reports on the new wave of anti-Turkish feeling in West Germany

Basle

THE BRITISH press has written a certain amount on the present situation in Turkey. What, however, is all but unknown is the situation of the four million Turkish immigrants and refugees living in West European countries, especially that of the circa two million Turks in West Germany.

There, the Turks are fast becoming the Jews of the 80s. For some years, a swell of racist hatred has been growing against the Turks, who are blamed for today's unemployment and social tensions. Throughout Germany, a wave of 'Turkenwitze' (vicious jokes against the Turks) is flourishing. 'What's blue and floats down the Rhine?' – 'a Turk in a rubbish bag.' Or, 'What's the difference between Jews and Turks?' – 'The Jews have already gone through it . . .' A priest in Aachen recently asked his 15-year-old confirmation class to write down all the 'Turkenwitze' they knew. Within 30 minutes they had collected 64 jokes.

The German authorities have in no way attempted to counteract this racist atmosphere. On the contrary, many officials go as far as to openly encourage it. The president of the CDU parliamentary group, Dregger, has declared that hostility towards foreigners is a 'natural and justified sentiment'. Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor, in his first declarations, called for the reduction in the number of Turkish 'co-citizens' – if necessary, through repatriation. Zimmermann, the present Minister for Home Affairs, proposed last March the deportation of all unemployed immigrants. Mass police raids and arrests in immigrant quarters and at building sites have already begun.

The General Secretary of the German Red Cross, Dr Jürgen Schilling, warned in October 1982, at a congress on the immigrant question, against the 'steadily growing army of potentially unemployed foreigners and their families' and the fact that '100 Turkish mothers give birth to 360 children whereas 100 German mothers give birth only to 130 children'. He went on to warn against the 'steady infiltration of oriental customs into the large cities of Central Europe' and asks, 'Why should Germans subordinate their national identity by showing brotherly love, when other Christians do not even think of doing this?' He calls on German bishops to fulfil the role of *patres Germaniae* and declares that repatriation must be considered as a measure to reduce the Turkish population. Neo-Fascist groups have also been increasingly active with their calls of 'foreigners out' and their attacks on, and murders of Turks. One group is called the 'Immigrant Extermination Commando'.

These attitudes also find expression in the court decisions concerning applications for asylum made by Turkish refugees, which are now nearly all refused. To begin with, the courts referred to information from the German Foreign Office that 'it is aware that newspapers published outside Turkey maintain that torture is a daily event in Turkey. The Foreign Office has however no indications that this is the case'. Recently, the courts began to say the opposite and still to refuse asylum: 'The fact that left-wing Kurds who are suspected of committing an offence against the state might have been tortured or mistreated does not automatically indicate political persecution. For torture and mistreatment are widespread phenomena which do not only effect those Kurds who are politically active.' (*Verwaltungsgerichthof*, Baden-Württenberg, 27.5.82.)

Another serious development is a whole series of extradition demands made by the junta against political opponents in exile. Over 65 of these concern Turks in Germany. The junta has adopted the tactic of falsely accusing these refugees of criminal offences in order to bypass the European extradition agreement of 1957, which forbids the extradition of political refugees. It is known that at least 14 of these Turks have already been extradited to an all too certain fate at the hands of the military. One remarkable case concerns Huseyin Balkir, a Turk who had already received political asylum in France and then made the mistake of visiting his family in Germany, where he was promptly arrested and now awaits extradition. All appeals from the French League of Human Rights have, so far, been of no avail.

There exists a clear complicity between the Turkish junta and the German authorities. Political opponents of the junta are refused asylum, extradited or expelled, whereas Grey Wolves (members of a Turkish Fascist organisation) are given a free hand in Germany.

Some local governments have also begun to introduce forced labour, whereby the refugees must work for the 'public good' by sweeping roads and so on for one to two DM (30-50p) an hour. If they refuse, they no

Washing facilities for Turkish refugees at a Tübingen camp

Jean Mohr

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longer have the right to social security.

Faced by this state of affairs, the European cooperative Longo Mai, which had already some months earlier founded the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Turkei-Flüchtlinge (working group refugees from Turkey) in Basle, to bring solidarity to Turkish refugees in Switzerland, decided to call an international congress in Basle, on 30 and 31 October. Representatives from 12 countries participated, including Britain, and members of several Turkish and Kurdish organisations were present. The congress decided to create the European Committee for the Defence of Refugees and Immigrants (CEDRI) whose offices will be at Longo Mai in Basle.

A resolution was passed by the congress and signed by representatives of the countries present. This calls firstly for the formation of an internationally recognised commission of lawyers which should travel to Turkey to investigate the handling of trials, the conditions in prisons and the clauses of the new constitution. Secondly it calls upon all European governments to halt all extradition of Turkish refugees, to grant asylum to those endangered in Turkey, to put a stop to all measures of 'dissuasion' and to protect the refugees from 'over-zealous' officials and from attacks by extreme right-wing organisations.

It was also decided to set up a Permanent European Intervention Committee, whose members would be ready at any time to intervene in urgent cases. This committee has already accomplished its first mission, on 15 and 16 November – that of sending a European delegation to visit some of the reception camps in Southern Germany. Among the participants were Christian Rostocker, representing the International Federation of Leagues of Human Rights: Rev. Werner Reiser, the Basle Cathedral vicar; Jean Mohr, the wellknown photographer; and others from France, Switzerland and Austria. At Regensburg, the local authorities refused the delegation entry into the camp, which created a scandal in the local press. At Tübingen, however, they inspected the camp, which is located in a former military barracks. Their report is in preparation.

The situation in Germany is far more serious than in other European countries. It is clear, however, that Germany is playing the role of 'test country', in which methods such as repatriation, police raids, extraditions and 'dissuasion' are being tried out. If there is no rapid international reaction against this policy, there exists the danger that these same methods will be adopted by other countries. Considering the joint declarations of Kohl and Thatcher, and the similarity of their political visions, one can only fear that Britain will be amongst the first countries to show an interest in Germany's immigrant and refugee policies. □

Those who are interested in further information or wish to participate in the work of CEDRI can write to: CEDRI, Missionstrasse 35, Postfach, CH-4002 Basle, Tel 41/61/446619; or Turkey Solidarity Campaign, 52 Acre Lane, London SW2, Tel 01-274 5888.

NORWAY

Right turn

Fred Halliday on Norwegian foreign policy

Oslo

AFTER MORE THAN one year of the conservative Kaire Willoch government, Norway has seen little of the social expenditure cuts characteristic of other right-wing counterparts. But in foreign policy there has been a noticeable shift – in part because of US pressure on Norway to play a more central role in confronting the USSR.

One US initiative has been to encourage Norway to increase its gas output and so reduce Western Europe's reliance on the new Soviet pipeline. But the Norwegians want outside support if they are going to engage in the large investments needed to boost output in the late 1980s and 1990s. The newly discovered Troll field off Bergen has substantial quantities of gas, but the water there is 350 metres deep (the North Sea limit so far has been 190 metres) and the field itself is relatively flat, thus requiring many drilling holes.

More immediate action has been taken in the military field. The government has encouraged the expansion of base facilities and arms stockpiles in central and northern Norway for use by US and Canadian troops in time of war. Military expenditure is to rise in real terms by 4 per cent this year. Norway does not allow foreign troops or nuclear weapons on its soil, but it is committed to contributing to the cost of installing cruise and Pershing missiles in other NATO countries. The Labour Party, reflecting growing popular disquiet, has now called for the temporary withholding of these funds.

The Norwegian peace movement faces a choice which would also present itself in Britain, if the UK eventually implemented a policy of nuclear disarmament. It can ban nuclear weapons from its soil and even declare that it will be a nuclear-free zone in time of war. But few believe that this would make any military difference once the nuclear crisis came. US submarines with nuclear weapons already visit Norwegian ports; and former Secretary of State Haig told his Norwegian counterpart that the USA had every intention of using Norwegian bases for nuclear deployment, if necessary.

No one, and certainly not the Russians, would believe a US pledge not to deploy nuclear weapons on allied bases, if war broke out. Even if such a commitment were respected, Norway contains communications facilities which form part of the nuclear attack system. These would, therefore, be obvious targets for nuclear assault by the USSR. Norwegian peace activists admit that, as long as their country remains part of NATO, it makes some political sense to call for the ban on nuclear weapons in their country, but that in military terms such a demand has little meaning. They have, nevertheless, dropped the call for Norway to leave NATO on the grounds that this is currently not a popular issue. □

POLICING LONDON

Grants for groups concerned with police accountability in Greater London

The GLC Police Committee is willing to consider applications for grant from projects and organisations concerned to make the police more accountable to the community and to monitor policing practices or aspects of them in London. Both new and existing organisations are eligible. Applications reflecting the interests of women, young people, and ethnic minority communities are particularly invited.

To qualify for consideration a group or organisation will be asked to demonstrate that its activities are in the interests of the people of London, or a section of them and fulfil a London-wide or specific local need which would otherwise not be met.

Write for full details and application form to: Director-General (PCS), Greater London Council, Room 567, The County Hall, London SE1 7PB.

POLICING LONDON
Free Newsletter, ten times a year, to Londoners and groups in the GLC area. Policing London covers events in the Met, the law and national policing issues relevant to London. Subscription rate for outside London: £10pa for institutions and libraries; £5 for individuals; sample copies 75p. To get copies write to the above address.

GLC
Working for London

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UNITED NATIONS

Kirkpatrick's riposte

On 5 November the NS *carried a story about the relationship between the US Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Mrs Jeane Kirkpatrick, and the South African government. It was based in part on a letter allegedly sent to Mrs Kirkpatrick by a member of the South African Embassy in Washington. The letter is reproduced on this page (the reproduction of the letter with the original article was compressed for reasons of space).*

We have now received the following letter from Mrs Kirkpatrick's spokesman at the UN:

United States Mission to the United Nations
November 19, 1982

Dear Sir:
In case any of your readers have not followed the matter in the press, I am responding here to Claudia Wright's article entitled 'A Girl's Best Friend,' published in the November 5, 1982 *New Statesman*.

For the record, I wish to state:

1. The United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations has never received any gift from the Government of South Africa or from any representative of that government.
2. The letter purportedly sent to the United States Permanent Representative by a South African diplomat, and reproduced in your magazine, was never received by Ambassador Kirkpatrick. I am reliably informed, moreover, that no such letter was composed at the South African Embassy in Washington, as alleged in the article.
3. The allegations and insinuations in the article, based largely on the fictitious letter, are no more credible than the letter itself.

Your readers should know, then, that there was no gift and no letter, only what appears to be malicious fabrication. In addition, the article's title, presumably chosen by the editors of your journal, is clear in its innuendo and in its gratuitous calumny. Overall, in fact, the article is so outrageous that legal action against your magazine is being contemplated by the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

Sincerely,
Joel Blocker
Counsellor for Press
and Public Affairs

The letter referred to by Mr Blocker came into the possession of the *New Statesman* from a source in the US State Department, which has previously proved reliable. If the letter is a forgery, therefore, it implies that a person or persons within the State Department are concerned to damage Mrs Kirkpatrick's reputation.

Other points in the way the story has been presented are relevant. First, the letterheaded stationery on which the letter was typed is identical to that used by the South African Embassy in Washington. Second, the typeface used for the letter appears to be identical to the face of a typewriter used in the South African Embassy. Third, it has been suggested that two mis-spellings in the the letter are not mistakes that would have been left in an official South African Embassy communication. But, if genuine, the circumstances in which such a letter would have been typed would have been clandestine. Fourth, at first Mr Swanepoel claimed that a middle-ranking diplomat like himself would not have written such a letter to Ambassador Kirkpatrick and that in any case he would not have signed it with his initials. Mr Swanepoel has subsequently admitted in an interview with a US newspaper that the signature on the letter is his normal one.

The denial on Ambassador Kirkpatrick's behalf must be regarded in the light of earlier statements she has made about the secret communications that have passed between her and General van der Westhuizen. After her clandestine meeting with the General in March 1981, the US press was able to expose her spokesmen's statements as misleading and false, and retractions were issued (see *NS* 3 April 1981).

It is also relevant to note that Mr Swanepoel joined the South African Ministry of Information in 1970. From 1973 to 1977 he was posted in Australia, and between 1977 and 1979 he was Information Attaché in London. During that period, as the revelations of the 'Muldergate' scandal have indicated, his Ministry, Minister, Connie Mulder, and Permanent Secretary, Eschel Rhoodie, were engaged in an extensive campaign of secret gifts, bribes and influence-buying on behalf of their government. □

EMBASSY OF SOUTH AFRICA
3051 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20008

December 1, 1981

H.E. Mrs. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick
Ambassador
United States Mission to the United Nations
799, United Nations Plaza
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

Excellency,

I am pleased to announce my recent arrival as Counsellor (Infromation) at the South African Embassy, replacing Mr. W. Lotz in that position. My curriculum vitae is attached for your information.

I have the privilege of informing you that my Government as priviously highly appreciates your activity for freedom and democracy. The bearer of this message has been authorised to present you with this gift on the occasion of your birthday as a token of appreciation from my Government.

I was also requested by Lt. Gen. P.W. van der Westhuizen to convey his best regards and gratitude.

Yours sincerely,

Pieter A. Swanepoel
COUNSELLOR (INFORMATION)

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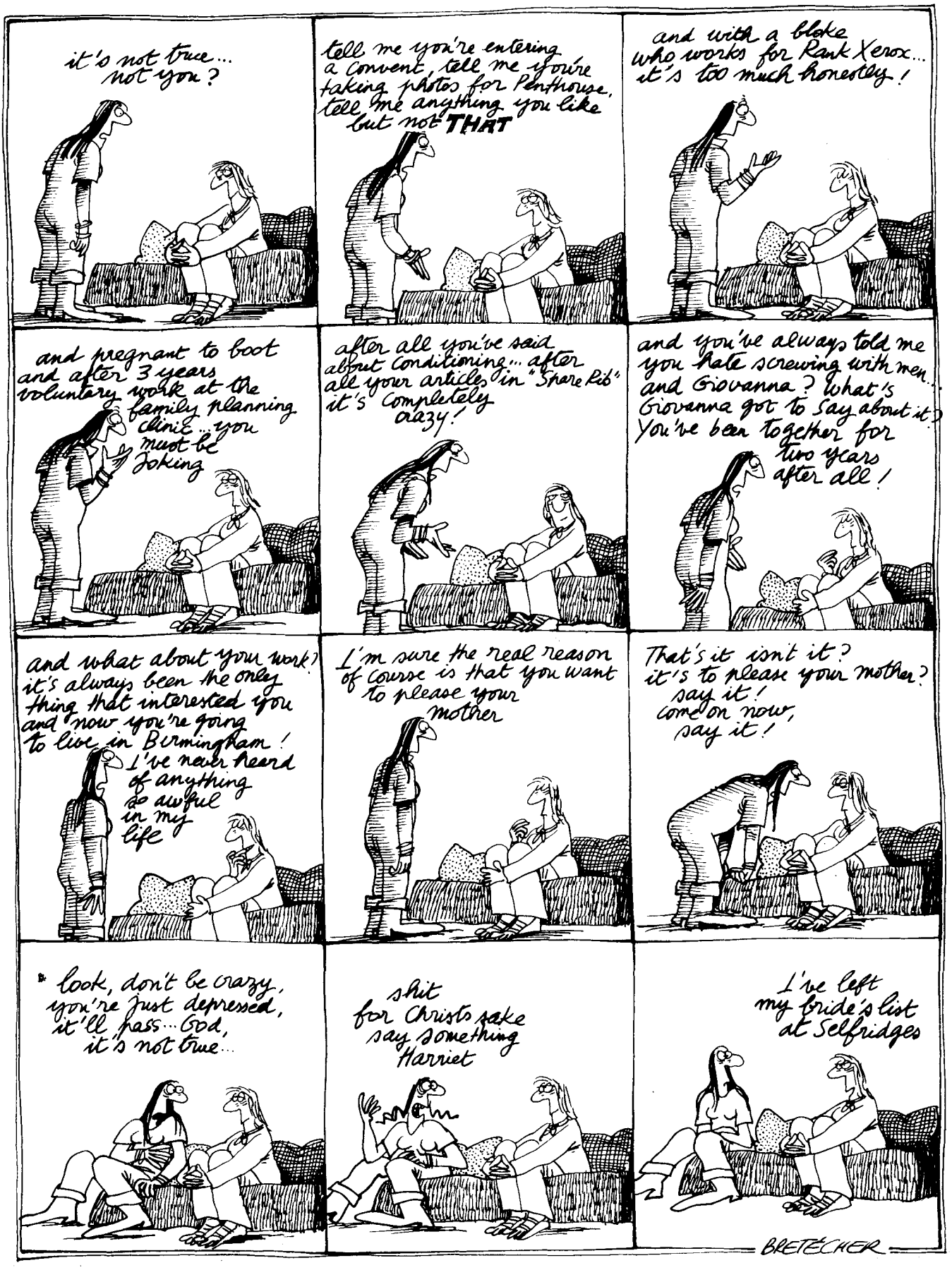
COLLABORATION


it's not true... not you?
tell me you're entering a convent, tell me you're taking photos for Penthouse, tell me anything you like but not THAT
and with a bloke who works for Rank Xerox... it's too much honestly!
and pregnant to boot and after 3 years voluntary work at the family planning clinic... you must be joking
after all you've said about conditioning... after all your articles in "Spare Rib" it's completely crazy!
and you've always told me you hate screwing with men... and Giovanna? What's Giovanna got to say about it? You've been together for two years after all!
and what about your work? it's always been the only thing that interested you and now you're going to live in Birmingham! I've never heard of anything so awful in my life
I'm sure the real reason of course is that you want to please your mother
That's it isn't it? it's to please your mother? say it! come on now, say it!
look, don't be crazy, you're just depressed, it'll pass... God, it's not true...
shit for Christs sake say something Harriet
I've left my bride's list at Selfridges
BRETÉCHER

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LETTERS

Figures of death

Philip Steadman, Centre for Configurational Studies, Open University, Milton Keynes

I am glad to see that Prof. Martin (Letters, 26 Nov.) has now effectively, if grudgingly, conceded the truth of everything that Duncan Campbell and I wrote (*NS* 1 Oct.) on the subject of fatal doses of radiation.

We discussed in our article not the subject of LD-50s in general, but the specific question of the LD-50 value used in the Home Office computer model for casualty calculation. The only public document in which the internal workings of this model are described is the paper by Bentley which Prof. Martin has now had an opportunity to examine. The changes made in this paper between April and December 1981 show that the brief exposure LD-50 value employed *has* been changed, on the advice of the MRC working party of which Prof. Martin was a member, from 450 rads to 600 roentgens (surface tissue doses in both cases) – a rise of roughly one-third. (Campbell and I actually wrote that the Home Office 'proposes to revise' its LD-50 value. We could have put it more strongly.)

Bentley's paper is not some tentative 'discussion document' as Prof. Martin seeks to imply. It is an official Home Office Report, whose text makes quite clear that it describes assumptions and values built in to the 'current casualty model' used for civil defence exercises and studies. The use of the Operational Evaluation Dose formula in the model has the effect of further raising the LD-50 value for doses to surface tissues received in one day or less, to a value of 800 roentgens – again as Campbell and I argued.

The veiled threat with which Prof. Martin closes his letter – that the Home Office response to criticism is likely to be to desist from publishing any such Reports in the future – is very characteristic of the attitude of the Home Office and its advisers to scientific discussion of civil defence matters generally.

Duncan Campbell writes: Such official studies of casualty levels as those by Bentley may indeed not be official *policy;* but that has not, apparently, deterred Home Office ministers and others from basing preposterous claims about the efficacy of civil defence measures on such estimates. Lord Belstead, for example, claimed while Minister of State that government civil defence measures would reduce casualties in war from ⅔ of the population to ⅓. If this claim wasn't based on scientific studies, whatever their deficiencies, was it based on any evidence at all?

For the record

Tony Chater, Editor, Morning Star, London EC4

I refer to the item 'Star Wars' (*NS* 12 Nov.) This is quite inaccurate and I would be pleased if your readers could be told the actual position. Ms Beatrix Campbell *was* accorded the right to reply to the article in the *Morning Star* by Barbara Switzer. She was offered a letter of up to 500 words in length, as is the normal practice. Ms Campbell has actually contributed a number of articles to the *Morning Star* so there is no discrimination against her. Indeed, we are about to begin a series of articles on the subject of the trade unions and the fight for women's rights. Ms Campbell has actually been asked to contribute an article to this series.

Out of the closet

R. E. Winter, General Secretary, SDP CND, Oxford

Sarah Benton (*NS* 19 Nov.) correctly reported that, this year, no known members of the SDP stood as 'ordinary' candidates for the CND National Council.

But the specialist group, SDP CND, now exists and we intend to represent the growing support for CND's policies among Social Democrats. As our aims do not, in fact, run counter to the party's constitution we have applied for, and expect to be granted, the status of an SDP Associated Organisation, together with Social Democrats for Peace, which is an umbrella peace group working alongside us.

At the moment both groups are concentrating our efforts on trying to persuade the party to reject cruise and Pershing II missiles. With an estimated 64 per cent of the party against their deployment (according to Gallup) the predominant mood seems to oppose the recommendations of our October Green Paper which supports the US/NATO decision.

So far the press seems not to have picked up this divergence of views within the party which we believe must now significantly affect any decision made concerning our future defence papers. Many in the SDP are now hoping for a more accurate reflection of what our members really think (in contrast to what they are expected to think) and it should be of signal interest to see what emerges from the meeting of the Council for Social Democracy, which decides SDP policy, in late January 1983.

Pressure on nukes

Harold Immanuel, Anti-Nuclear Campaign National Organiser, Sheffield

Your report 'Pressure on Nukes' (*NS* 12 Nov.) on the Rally & Conference which launched a national campaign against the PWR (pressurised water nuclear reactor) claimed that 'unions are prepared to oppose PWRs because their design and technology is American'. This is extremely inaccurate.

Possibly the single greatest impetus to trade union opposition to the PWR came with the resolution passed at this year's Labour Party Conference, which was opposed to the siting of a PWR 'at Sizewell or anywhere else in the UK on the grounds of need, cost and safety'. It was passed overwhelmingly, on a card vote, by a ratio of 4½ votes to 1. This means that practically every union affiliated to the Labour Pary, apart from EETPU and AUEW, supports total opposition to the PWR, not simply because it is American.

The article also claims that 'ecological campaigners preferred (to) campaign against nuclear power in principle . . . whatever form it takes.' Again, this is wrong.

The Anti Nuclear Campaign (ANC), which organised the Rally & Conference, is itself a broad-based coalition of over 250 organisations, including both environmentalists and trade unions, opposed to nuclear power. It has a clear policy, supported overwhelmingly by its policy-making AGM, to organise a broad-based national campaign against the PWR – and to include in it organisations which, while not necessarily anti-nuclear, are opposed to the PWR. It is worth quoting briefly from the speech of one environmentalist – Paul Ekins, representing the Ecology Party – who said at the Rally: 'Obviously I could wish that all the organisations and individuals in the coalition were opposed to nuclear power in general. And, equally obviously, I hope that they may in future be able to come over to that position. But it is really immensely encouraging to hear these powerful new voices raised, perhaps for the first time, against any form of nuclear power.'

Down to earth

Dave Cook, London SW9

By suggesting that Labour's main problems in 'preparing for the next general election' are lack of clarity about which of its policies to implement in the next Parliament, or how to present these policies convincingly, Peter Kellner (*NS* 19 Nov) gives a very lopsided emphasis on what needs to be done to get a Labour victory.

Certainly on nuclear weapons, economic policy and immigration Labour Conferences have adopted more left-wing and more coherent policies than hitherto. Nonetheless between these policies and the people in whose name they are framed, the millions whose lives are devastated by unemployment and racism, or who feel strongly against the bomb, there is a large gap. To bridge it needs much more than clear policy presentation, important though this is.

Take unemployment. As a result of the blitz of closures, massive trade union defeats and the whole shift to the right in the agenda of political discussion, there is widespread pessimism about the possibilities of an alternative. To overcome this urgently needs a major 'Peoples March For Jobs' type of initiative in 1983, on a bigger scale than last year. This will make unemployment and how to tackle it much more of a political issue. It could provide ways in which communities, at present shell-shocked by redundancies, can develop new confidence and strength through active involvement. It could provide the means whereby Labour's economic policies are brought down from the clouds and made into a clear and popular alternative.

While a section of the Labour left now recognises the need for this mass campaigning approach, to get it on the scale needed means that we will have to look outside the soils of traditional Labourism. The right-wing are bitterly opposed to anything that smacks of mass politics, and most of the left are still locked in combat in the narrow confines of Labour Party structures. Most of the dynamic and influential political inputs into the labour movement over the last 15 years began, and were largely sustained from, outside the Labour Party, although many Labour Party members associated with them: UCS, the Vietnam campaign, the national movements in Wales and Scotland, black political movements, students, women, the ANL, the People's March for Jobs and the revitalised CND are cases in point.

Now, as then, Mr Foot's dreaded 'extra Parliamentary' politics is likely to be Labour's only chance.

Information wanted

Annette Tapert, 39 Moore Park Road, London SW6

Letters from the front: I am compiling an anthology of letters written home from battlefields since 1900. All letters will be treated with respect and returned.

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Charles Fox

Once and future image

IMAGES planted early thrive like evergreens. Blind Pew's stick, tapping on the frosty road outside the Admiral Benbow, goes on inhabiting the back of the mind, somehow more menacing than most things that turn up in real life. Ethics, too, put down roots as casually as acorns falling. In between the wars we children of the lower-middle or working classes learned not to sneak or hit below the belt simply because that was the way our heroes in the twopenny weeklies behaved, whether it was Harry Wharton or Rockfist Rogan. Nowadays, of course, these social spin-offs are thought about in advance, with young adults catered for by writers who entertain yet also rub their readers' noses in the messiness to come.

In the case of Nigel Hinton's *Buddy* (Dent, £5.95), the messiness has arrived already. Buddy's father has just spent three months inside for breaking and entering, the boy's mother decides she can take no more and pushes off. There are uneasy, not to say downright awkward, relationships at school with both staff and pupils, except for the obligatory pair of cheerful West Indians. Buddy is so-called, incidentally, because his father idolised Buddy Holly (Dad turns out to be an unreconstructed Teddy Boy, oiling his quiff and donning a drape jacket and fluorescent green socks before meeting his son's teacher). The characterisation, in fact, is adept. And, although the book's opening line has Buddy stealing a fiver from his mother's purse, he really is a good lad, intent thereafter upon sticking to the straight and narrow.

Murder rather than theft is the crime which provides an excuse, rather than the subject-matter, for Jan Needle's *Piggy in the Middle* (Deutsch, £3.95). An Asian man is battered to death and the police question his son – but in dubious ways and for an unconscionably long time. Which disturbs Sandra, a young policewoman, not to mention her boyfriend, a local journalist. At the risk of sounding sexist, this book seems to be aimed at girls rather than boys. Which does not mean it sidesteps griminess or bowdlerises – well, not too much – the street talk (shitty, bugger and other secondary swear-words pop up from time to time). Much more disconcerting are the plethora of clichés and the fact that the prose needs to be read at a gallop, rather like a front-page story in the *Sun*.

Realities are also to the fore in Leon Garfield's *The Apprentices* (Heinemann, £6.95), even if they are the realities of 200 years ago. Described on the blurb as 'a dazzling cycle of novels in miniature', the book actually consists of 12 short stories, several overlapping at the edges but all dealing with the ups and downs of life as an apprentice. Superstitions often provide a clue to actions. Just as, in our first book, Buddy believed that if he held his breath until a bird flew off the wire it would mean his mum would be

home when he got back from school, so an 18th-century midwife, Mrs Moss, holds equally firm but flimsy notions about her task. 'Breeve froo yer nose', she tells one woman, 'in case yer baby's born without sense or soul. Gets out froo yer mouf, marm.' Windows must be unlatched, cupboards and boxes opened 'else your labour will be 'ard as nails'. Even bottles are not exempted: 'No stoppers or corks in 'em. Anyfink corked up corks you up too.' And London is not filled with sweetness and light. Children lurk behind tombstones, waiting to steal the wreaths and sell them back to the undertaker. And the livelier apprentices' notion of a good evening out appears to have taken in throwing oranges from the gallery of Covent Garden Opera House, dropping in on a cockfight, picking up girls in the Strand, and tipping a watchman into a horse-trough. What might be called a hard day's night.

OUR own century's history, treated far less exuberantly, provides the background for Evert Hartman's *War Without Friends* (Chatto, £5.50), translated from the Dutch. The Nazis' occupation of Holland is viewed from underneath, but, as it were, slightly askew. Arnold's father is a Dutch Nazi, his sister goes out with German soldiers. Meanwhile the boy has to attend a school bulging with young Dutch patriots. All the obvious tensions, together with Arnold's gathering doubts about his father's values, go to make up a novel that is worth reading by anyone of any age: subtle and sensible as well as compassionate. Far less credible, although oozing with worthiness, is Morton Rhue's *The Wave* (Kestrel, £4.95), described as 'a novelization of a teleplay by Johnny Dawkins based on a short story by Ron Jones', yet also alleged to deal with a genuine occurrence at a high school in Palo Alto, California. A history teacher sets out to demonstrate how good Germans were seduced by Nazi methods. He imposes tight discipline upon his class – only to discover that the students enjoy saluting, being led and treated like a tribe ('It's like being born again,' chirrups the school misfit). Needless to say, they all end up recognising the error of their instincts. Unfortunately, nobody behaves or speaks like a real human being, so the reader tends to skip the high-minded bits.

Good science-fiction, like poetic metaphor, stretches the imagination. And Nicholas Fisk's *Sweets from a Stranger* (Kestrel, £4.95) begins with an extra-terrestrial using crystallised fruit to lure earthly children to a faraway niche among the stars. Another story, 'Teddies Rule, O.K?', is nicely macabre while staying firmly inside the home. In yet another story a nasty little girl torments robots. And 'Perfect Paul' brings back recollections of that character of Saki's who was gulped down by a wolf that heard her good conduct medals clinking together. Paul goes to heaven but gets irritated by imperfections in the celebrities around him, all of them, it seems, doomed to go on repeating their hit-lines ('Let them eat cake!', 'Pi^2', 'Sparrowhawks, Ma'am', 'England expects' and 'One, two, three o'clock, four o'clock rock'). But not all the stories work that well, victims of the fuzziness that fantasy is heir to.

Classy writers of course, make the most unlikely events seem feasible. For instance, Philip Pullman's *Count Karlstein* (Chatto, £5.50) is, on the face of it, an account of how two girls avoid ending up as a late-night snack for Zamiel, Prince of the Mountains

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and Demon Huntsman. The place is Switzerland, the year 1816, and the point is not so much the plot as how the narrative unfolds. It is supplied by a number of hands, including a comic policeman and a ladylike governess ('An English gentlewoman can rise above any circumstances, given intelligence and a loaded pistol'). And at least one of the heroines stays cool, even after discovering that the key to her cell is concealed in a bowl of soup ('Being Prudent I finished the soup before I escaped'). To compare this book with T. H. White's *Mistress Masham's Repose* is to risk hyperbole, yet it shares a similar concern with making the improbable seem remarkably precise. Which may not be such a bad way of shaping up to the world ahead. □

PICTURE BOOKS
Andrew Clements

Bearly human

EVERY parent could construct his or her own theory of books for children that has nothing to do with aesthetics, plot or illustrations and everything to do with length and ability to hold the attention. Reading to a pre-school child concentrates the mind wonderfully; books which bore the parent are as ineffective as those which have the child turning the page long before the text is finished. When pure picture books do not stimulate any longer, there is a nice balance to be struck between words and pictures. A rising three-year-old is fractionally too young for some Beatrix Potter, especially her more prolix, awkwardly written books, but *The Complete Adventures of Peter Rabbit* (Warne, £5.95) is a useful omnibus edition, combining said rabbit with Benjamin Bunny, the Flopsie Bunnies and the *Tale of Mr Tod*. Tidily redesigned and with some illustrations blown up, it lacks the charm of the originals, but the large format may be more serviceable. *Babar's Anniversary Album* by Jean and Laurent de Brunhoff (Methuen, £9.95) is a similar compendium of classics, three stories each by de Brunhoff *père et fils*, to mark the series' 50th anniversary. I prefer Jean's originals to his son's sequels; they have more charm and fantasy and the illustrations are sparer and more finely drawn. But to addicts the whole volume will be self-recommending.

The classics apart, the autumn mix is a familiar blend of one-offs and spin-offs,

flashes of inspiration and workmanlike additions to well-worn series. Elsa Belkow's *Peter in Blueberry Land* (Ernest Benn, £3.95) is a valuable addition to a classic series, beautifully produced with clean bright illustrations, translated from the German original by Alison Sage. Another German import, *Selina, the Mouse and the Giant Cat* (Faber, £3.95) by Susi Bohdal, is a marvellous fantasy, with exquisite etchings; very young children might be frightened by the story in which a cat grows more and more menacing, but our rising three-year-old took it in her stride. She baulked, however, at Lee Lorenz's *The Feathered Ogre* (Dent, £3.95), which adopts an adult illustrative style (the author is a cartoonist for the *New Yorker*) to retell a traditional fairy story; the ogre does not manage to combine fierceness with charm in the way that, say, Sendak's Wild Things do.

Bertie and the Big Red Ball by Beryl Cook and Edward Lucie-Smith (John Murray, £4.95) promises equal visual delights, and there are the expected bulbous ladies, a splendidly repulsive dog and a pair of cute tortoises, but the narrative is thin and disappointing. *Friends* (Dent, £4.50) manages to marry witty illustrations to a worthwhile story more successfully; Helme Heine does not make the mistake of loading too much into either component, and the result can be comfortably read as a first attempt at storytelling for very small children. Aimed at an even younger market is Janet and Allan Ahlberg's *The Baby's Catalogue* (Kestrel, £4.95), based on the observation that children are fascinated by any kind of catalogue well before they are a year old. It follows five families through their daily routine, showing their pets and their gardens, their meals and their games. It is witty and shrewd, as detailed in its own way as the Ahlbergs' earlier *Each Peach, Pear, Plum*.

Peepo! Home Sweet Home by Maureen Roffey (Bodley Head, £4.50) is similarly basic, with cut-outs to turn it into a game; toddlers beginning to talk will probably enjoy the question-and-answer approach.

FIRMLY in the spin-off category are Frank Muir's new 'What-a-Mess' titles – *What-a-Mess in Spring, Summer, Autumn* and *Winter* (Ernest Benn, £1.95 each). The illustrations by Joseph Wright are cluttered and uninviting; Muir's texts are precious and too clever by half. The blurb suggests that the series is aimed at fives to nines, but many at the top end of that range will surely be unimpressed. Russell Hoban's *The Battle of Zormla* and *The Flight of Bembel Rudzuk*, with pictures by Colin McNaughton (Methuen/Walker, £3.50 each) are aimed at a similar age group and inhabit a marvellous fantasy world of dressing-up and pure anarchy; some of the verbal jokes, though, are more appropriate to adults (the 'fortress of Wendi Husa', for instance) and may confuse weaker readers. Graham Oakley's Church Mice are already established as witty and sharp personalities; their latest adventure is *The Church Mice in Action* (Macmillan, £3.95), as usual crammed full of richly detailed pictures and with a substantial text (bedtime readers beware!).

Rosemary Wells's *A Lion for Lewis* (Macmillan, £4.50) is disappointing after her earlier books and fairly expensive. The style of the pictures is cloying and exudes transatlantic saccharine; the text is dull. *Gilbert and the Bicycle* by Jack Harvey (Hutchinson, £3.95) is, by contrast, a delight: a genuinely funny and well thought out story, with sufficient detail to hold the interest and some crisp animal characters. *The Buttercup Buskers* (Heinemann, £3.95) is based on an extraordinary character who can be often encountered in Cambridge collecting for charity with a cat sitting on his head, white mice running round his hat and a menagerie on his bicycle. Chris Callery and Margaret Chamberlain's story and pictures are routine, but children who have met the real thing would no doubt appreciate the souvenir.

There is also, as ever, a fine crop of bear books. *The Bear on the Doorstep* by Jane Flory illustrated by Carolyn Croll (Chatto, £3.50) manages to ensure popularity by including a bear *and* rabbits in its tight little story; *Wake up, Bear . . . it's Christmas!* (Heinemann, £3.95) by Stephen Gammell is a conventional tale of a bear settling down for its winter sleep, etc, etc . . . Jill Murphy's *Peace at Last* (Macmillan, £1.50) has a whole family of them; why do bears sometimes seem more human than the real thing? I must confess that I find Susanna Gretz's *Teddybears go Shopping* (Ernest Benn, £4.25) pretty repulsive, but my daughter loved it and insists on reciting the brutes' lists of junk food on every visit to the supermarket. The pictures are garish and obviously appealing.

Finally, two volumes from A. & C. Black are perhaps aimed more at playgroups and primary schools than parents. *Tinderbox* (£4.95) gives 66 songs with their piano accompaniments and advice on percussion – the selection ranges from 'Puff the Magic Dragon' to A. A. Milne's 'Halfway Down'. *The Tinderbox Assembly Book* (£6.95) is a *mélange* of poems, stories and ideas for projects and discussions. There are also copious book lists, thematically arranged; a book for reference rather than the Christmas stocking. □

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CHILDREN'S BOOKS
Henry Tube

Of mice and men

I SUPPOSE Kipling started it in 1894/5 with *The Jungle Books*. Then came *The Wind in the Willows* of 1908 and so, by way of a searing story about war between red and grey squirrels which I vividly remember from my childhood, to *Watership Down* in 1972. The story is one of hardship and catastrophe, endurance and courage suffered and evinced by essentially domestic, peace-loving protagonists. The characters are animals, more or less naturalistically described as to physique and setting, but with human minds, feelings and articulate speech. The genre reflects its period in a glass darkly. Mowgli is a good imperialist, learning to respect the laws and customs of an alien society; *The Wind in the Willows* is a slightly edgy middle-class Edwardian idyll, making fun of the *nouveau riche* Toad, threatened by the lower-class Wild Wood.

The later versions of the story have developed into a means of conveying to children the apocalyptic upheavals of the 20th century: animal groups facing extinction migrate to better lands and battle heroically for survival. In George MacBeth's first novel for children, *The Rectory Mice* (Hutchinson, £5.95), the animal saga and its human counterpart are run in parallel. The story begins with Grandfather Mouse reading out the words on a scrap of newspaper (these mice are not wholly naturalistic) to his family assembled for breakfast: 'Archduke Ferdinand Assassinated in Sarajevo'. As the troops settle down to their slogging-match in France, the war to extrude the mice from the rectory attic grows nastier at home. The book starts rather slowly, but grows steadily more gripping.

The leader of the Rectory Mice is called Trinity. By some odd coincidence the Moses of W. J. Corbett's migratory harvest-mice is called Pentecost. These mice cannot read nor do they have any direct contact with humans. Their world is rougher and closer to much of our own than that of the relatively sheltered mice in the rectory – foxes, owls and snakes must be placated, outwitted or blackmailed, other creatures fought or evaded, for the Wild Wood rules OK. Corbett occasionally lets his pleasure in dialogue run away with him, but *The Song of Pentecost* (Methuen, £5.95) is a notable first book, full of humour as well as excitement. My eight-year-old assistant, Nat Tube, picked it out and read it to the bitter end, though it's really for somewhat older readers and he did find the end upsetting.

After her success with *The Borrowers* in 1952, Mary Norton wrote three sequels. The fourth, *The Borrowers Avenged* (Kestrel,

H.H. Asquith: Letters to Venetia Stanley

Edited by Michael and Eleanor Brock

These are the letters of a Prime Minister in his sixties to the young girl he adored. They are unique because of their scope and abundance, full of political revelations and war secrets. They reveal a statesman who faced political ruin in an Irish civil war and who escaped through the war crisis of July 1914. Illustrated £19.50

James Joyce

Richard Ellmann

'The greatest literary biography of the century has not, which would be impossible, become greater, but it has . . . become truer . . . Two decades of Joycean scholarship since the first edition of the biography have not thrown up a finer scholar than Ellmann, to whom have been granted in addition the most unscholarly gifts of wit, grace, and compassion . . . Joyce is more alive than ever in this wonderful redaction of one of the master-pieces of the age, whose publication must be considered the crowning event of the Joyce centenary.' Anthony Burgess in *The Observer.* Illustrated £25

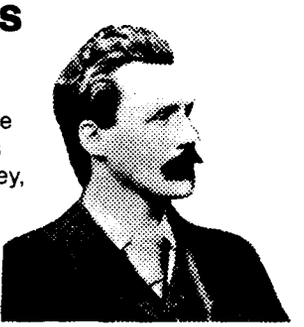
Collected Poems of Ivor Gurney

Chosen and edited by Patrick Kavanagh

'At last we have an authoritative *Collected Poems.* P.J. Kavanagh's task has been a difficult one, and he has done it with insight and affection . . . The result is a large body of work which is extremely powerful in its own right and is also a significant landmark in literary history.' Andrew Motion in *The T.L.S.* 'Splendid selection . . . an original, lively, and sorely tried mind.' D.J. Enright in *The Observer.* £12

Gissing: A Life in Books

John Halperin



'Halperin's biography makes fascinating and instructive reading . . . Other biographers have made intelligent analyses of the connections between Gissing's literary themes; sex, money, and class – and a life in which these were the ruling factors. None has established the links with quite the force and shrewdness which Professor Halperin brings to the subject.' *The Economist.* Illustrated £18.50

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs

Edited by J.A. Simpson

'There are plenty of delights here for the addicted. It goes by my bedside along with Fowler, Brewer, and Chambers, for insomniac dipping. And it would be very nice in a Christmas stocking.' *Glasgow Herald.* £7.95

The First Clerihews

E. Clerihew Bentley and collaborators

This is an undreamt-of gold-mine for devotees of the clerihew: a notebook compiled by Bentley and his friends when in their teens at St. Paul's School, London. The verses are mostly by Bentley, and many are excellent – they would surely have been published had the notebook not disappeared. It has only recently been rediscovered, and is published here in a facsimile edition with transcriptions of the verses and marginal drawings by G.K. Chesterton £6.95

Oxford University Press

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£5.50) comes after an interval of over 20 years. The Borrowers are themselves tiny humans, living in the crevices and on the scraps of a secure, old-fashioned English society of village, church and rectory. It's a clever idea and Mary Norton is a deft and polished storyteller, but one can see why animals work better. Humans, even Lilliputians, need moral and psychological complexities, but Norton's Borrowers are not much more than animated dolls.

CHILDREN, of course, like dolls and books with doll-like characters. They get quite enough moral and psychological reality at home, you might say. There's still clearly a buoyant market for witches, dragons and spells, stories in which the ordinary laws of existence are suspended or altered by magic. In Katherine Moore's *Moog*, first published in 1936 with delightful line drawings by her then 11-year-old daughter Jane and now republished (Allison & Busby, £4.95), the magic is evil and is cancelled simply by kindness, after one of those symbolic journeys in which the good companions each contribute one special skill towards overcoming the obstacles. The book is for youngish readers and the obstacles as well as the evil are fairly easily overcome. Moore's new book, *The Little Stolen Sweep* (Allison & Busby, £4.95), is a tougher proposition, a time-travel story in which a modern child is drawn back into the 19th-century underworld. A child certainly needed magic to get out of that.

Who left me in my seventh year,
A comfort to my mother dear,
And Mr Pope, the overseer?
My Father.

Thomas Hood's pleasantly cynical poems are always worth another read and go specially well aloud. They are republished with collage illustrations, reminiscent of Max Ernst, by Pavel Büchler (Chatto, £3.95). Christopher Isherwood's *People One Ought to Know* (Macmillan, £3.95) is published for the first time, though it was written in 1925 and illustrated by the then 11-year-old Sylvain Mangeot, whose grandfather employed Isherwood as his secretary. The poems were actually written to explain the pictures, which show various eccentric animals:

The funny appearance of this rabbit
Was caused by its disgusting habit
Of eating porridge with its tea.

Quite fun, but not, I think, a classic, nor in the Spike Milligan class for that fine touch of outrageousness. Milligan is one of the contributors to an excellent book of round-songs, *Flying A Round* (A&C Black, £4.95) by innumerable hands, named and anonymous, which, with a little preparation, could transform your long car-journey into a continuous round of live entertainment. You could also pack *The Riddle Book* (Macmillan, £4.95), compiled by Kevin Crossley-Holland from all ages including our own.

For stay-at-homes there's a beautifully illustrated book from Germany, A. Vogel's *Big Book for Growing Gardeners* (Macmillan, £5.95), set out in alphabetical order – Avocadoes to Loofah Gourds to Tomatoes – and including recipes as well as a small trowel and four packets of seeds. Another German book, Eva Raupp Schliemann's *Fungi Round the Year* (A&C Black, £3.95), is the most careful and helpful introduction to this potentially lethal hobby that I've come across. I confess, though, that I prefer to think of my dear nephews and nieces sitting safely indoors with scissors and glue and *Little Grey Rabbit's House* (Heinemann, £4.95), a cut-out book devised and painted by Faith Jacques.

Finally, here's a short list of paperback stories, recommended by my chief assistant, Amy Tube, aged 10, for those blank spaces over the Christmas holiday. *Tod's Owl* by Richard Potts (Knight, 95p) is 'a really good book', though in part a sad one, about boys and their pets. *The Case of the Counterfeit Race Horse* by Elizabeth Levy (Knight, 95p) worked up to a good climax but left my reviewer confused in the middle. In my experience stories about nobbling racehorses always leave one feeling a bit stupid. On the other hand Carolyn Keene's *The Secret of the Swiss Chalet* (Sparrow, 95p) is 'one of the finest adventures I have ever read' and one must admit she's read a good many, especially by this author, whose *The Haunted Lagoon* (Sparrow, 95p) 'is about a completely different climate' and concerns, you've guessed it, pirate treasure: 'Anyway they find the pirate treasure and also Uncle Tracey. All is revealed.' □

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POETRY
John Lucas

Night walker

Collected Poems of Ivor Gurney
ed. P. J. KAVANAGH *Oxford* £12

Sometime in the early 1930s Edward Thomas's widow, Helen, visited Ivor Gurney at Dartford Asylum where he was to spend the rest of his short tragic life. She discovered that he refused ever to go into the asylum's grounds because 'it was not his idea of the country at all – the fields, woods, water-meadows and footpaths he loved so well – and he would have nothing to do with that travesty of something sacred to him'. That word 'sacred' is not lightly invoked. Although in his excellent introduction P. J. Kavanagh rightly remarks that Gurney is not a 'local' poet – with all the limiting meanings the term holds – there can be no doubt that Gurney saw, felt and *knew* himself to belong to a particular place. In 'Crickley Hill', written from war-time France where Gurney fought with the Gloucesters, he begs 'You hills of home, woodlands, white roads and inns/That star and line our darling land, still keep/Memory of us . . . .' And the Wordsworthian sense of transactional relationship with place is always there. Gurney possesses and is possessed by his area of England:

Sand has the ants, clay ferny weeds for play
But what shall please the wind now the trees are away
War took on Witcombe steep? . . .
It was right for the beeches to stand over Witcombe reaches,
Until the wind roared and softened and died to sleep.

The implications of this and several other related poems cut even deeper than 'Binsey Poplars'. The sense of loss is more exactly defined in terms of place and relationship to place. In one of many heart-wrenching poems that Gurney wrote out of his madness, and which acknowledges a sense of being divorced from place in a manner similar to Clare's 'The Flitting', he notes that 'high autumn goes beyond my pen/And snow lies inexprest in the deep lanes'.

Expression is all, and is complex. There is nothing in Gurney of that Georgian pastoralism of fake rustic simplicities with which he has usually been associated. His is real knowledge of place, of 'Cotswold, my two thousand years' home', as he calls it. It shows in the repeated, loving naming of names. It also and more importantly shows in his sense of a multi-layered past, of previous possessions which contribute to the full meaning of place. One poem begins:

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'The bare line of the hill/Shows Roman and/A sense of Rome hangs still/Over the land'. It may seem fanciful or fashionably elegiac, begging to be compared with 'On Wenlock Edge'. But Housman's Uricon is firmly buried whereas Gurney's poem ends: 'Scabious guards the steeps,/Trefoil the slopes yield'. Scabious is the original Latin name, trefoil the Anglo-Saxon version of the Latin *trifolium*.

The language on which Gurney draws is rooted in various pasts which are rich in what they yield and invaluable as safeguards against shallowness, casual ownership. Add to the Roman and Anglo-Saxon the Danish settlement of Gloucester and you can understand why he is so keen to experiment with kennings, why he should speak of 'clutch-frost' or on one occasion call the sun 'fire-swinger'. These experiments do not always work, but the imaginative daring that went into them is highly significant. When he says of his 'Lock-Keeper' – a figure who is surely intended to be put beside Thomas's 'Lob' – that he had 'A net of craft of eye, heart, kenning and hand', you feel that the pun on kenning/cunning is meant to create an homology. And in the wonderful 'Felling a Tree' Gurney celebrates the sacramental relationship between the tree-feller and 'the tree that for long had watched Wales glow strong,/Seen Severn, and farm, and Brecon, Black Mountains times without reckon, /And tomorrow would be fuel for the bright kitchen – for brown tea, against cold night'. That lovely absorption into the poem of the 'brown tea' could only be done by someone who cared for what he calls 'the darkness of common things'.

And who made that darkness authentic through cadence. For Gurney's poems bring back into English poetry the kind of expressive rhythms, the variety and energy of breathed utterance that take you back to the Elizabethan writers he so passionately admired. And not merely the writers. Gurney also had an intense admiration for William Byrd. (He was a student of Vaughan Williams, heard and was enthralled by the first performance of the Tallis Fantasia, but discovered Byrd for himself as we know from two undated but comparatively late poems.) Gurney has a more thrilling range of rhythms than any other writer of his generation, Thomas included; and I am sure that some of that is owed to the example Elizabethan composers set him, of making music fit the words, but doing it in a way that stretches metre beyond the normalities of spoken verse. (This will also explain Gurney's fondness for internal rhymes.)

Sometimes the rhythms have a hectic excitement about them, particularly in the striding run-on lines that I am tempted to feel belong to the compulsive night walker we know Gurney to have been. And in the earlier, more conventional poems the energies peter out, or are muffled. But in the great period, from 1919-23, and in a few later poems, and whether he was writing out of his memories of soldiering in France or about his England, Gurney produced work which, thanks to P. J. Kavanagh, we can now see is that of a poet of unique value. □

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The Hunger Marchers in Britain 1920-1940

PETER KINGSFORD
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In public memory the Jarrow March of 1936 has come to epitomise British protest against unemployment. Jarrow, however, was a special case and became such a potent symbol only because it followed in the wake of a number of marches organised by the National Unemployed Workers' Movement. Six national marches took place between 1922 and 1936 and these represent the pattern of organised pressure exerted by the unemployed on an establishment that alternated between fear of revolt and the necessity of preventing starvation. *The Hunger Marchers in Britain* sets out to put the record straight. It is a conscientious and well-researched account but Peter Kingsford doesn't wear his learning lightly; the narrative is sometimes overburdened with detail, sometimes brought to a halt by a sudden fall of fact. Such a quibble, however, should not deter any sufficiently enthusiastic reader. It is a difficult balance to keep in any serious study and much of Kingsford's detail necessarily comes from primary sources.

Symptomatic of early establishment reaction is Bonar Law's remark, 'I am sick and tired of hearing about the unemployed marchers and do not want anything more to do with them.' Proof, if any were needed, that the Tory Party is remarkably consistent in at least one area of its policy. More surprising was Baldwin's refusal to meet a deputation. In 1930 the NUWM was listed by the Labour Party as a proscribed organisation and the third national march was, in fact, directed against the short-lived Labour government.

This book is also a chronicle of heroic individual efforts: Wal Harrington (the marchers' acknowledged leader), Harry MacShane, Sid Elias, Emrhys Llewellyn, Tom Mann etc. To these must be added the unnumbered and anonymous sacrifices made in the effort to bring the plight of the unemployed to wider public attention. By the middle Thirties the NUWM had gained influential sympathisers among writers, academics, politicians and lawyers, but as the decade wore on the worsening international situation eclipsed unemployment as news. The advent of the Second World War temporarily eliminated the problem.

In a period of deepening recession and increasing unemployment Peter Kingsford's book makes salutary reading and although, as Bill Paynter points out in his foreword, living conditions have changed, many of the principles being fought over then have a disturbing relevance for us today.

John Levett

Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner

WILLIAM MAXWELL
Chatto £15

'Do you ever think of the Censor', Sylvia Townsend Warner wrote to an American friend in 1940 '. . . as roomfuls of ladies and gentlemen, all engaged in the embarrassing occupation of reading other people's letters?' Her own letters, as far as we can tell from this selection, might have been specially composed to reduce the chance of causing embarrassment in the uninvited reader; they never go in for frantic self-revelation, like Lawrence's, or lapse into feyness, as Katherine Mansfield's sometimes do. They are spirited and often humorous: rereading her own work, the author sees her ineradicable moral purpose 'shining out like a bad fish in a dark larder'.

There are enough observations of this sort to make Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Letters* exceptionally readable and beguiling. She's adept at transforming the ordinary into the arresting, albeit on a small scale. But her letters are too sporadic to provide a continuing commentary or narrative, and indeed her experiences are not of a kind to command interest for their own sake. She went to Spain in 1936, it's true, to help out at a Red Cross bureau; she lived through the second world war; she travelled in America and Europe; and out of all this a series of vignettes and impressions is assembled. What you don't get are back-

Philip Gross

A Soviet memorial

The world split open. Magma spewed
from the fissure, burning, cooled
and left this man of granite
rigid, several times our size,

this face thrust, punching through
distractions, gusts of autumn leaves.
His hammer and his fist are one.
He thinks in millions

and megawatts. Beneath his feet
an old man reads the paper, grumbles, spits.
The gardeners fuss with borders.
Sometimes, lovers meet.

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ground stories, gossip, malice, or a feeling for the contretemps to rivet our attention.

You find the author, with Valentine Ackland (her companion for over 30 years), occupying a succession of country cottages, taking minor inconveniences in her stride ('in order to get anything from the shed we have to wade through a flooded rubbish heap'), working, keeping in touch with friends, appreciating the antics of animals. The effect is of steadiness, good sense, warmth and productive attention to detail; but for all we can tell to the contrary from this volume, it may *be* an effect. The editing has been stringent in one sense (many letters reduced to a sentence or two, and no indication of the grounds – the quality of being unexceptionable? – on which the excerpts are chosen) but rather slapdash in another (one footnote at least invites you to consult a letter not included).

It will be good, at some future date, to read these letters in their entirety; in the meantime, there's enough here to remind us of Sylvia Townsend Warner's special qualities as an author – charm, austerity and erudition among them.

Patricia Craig

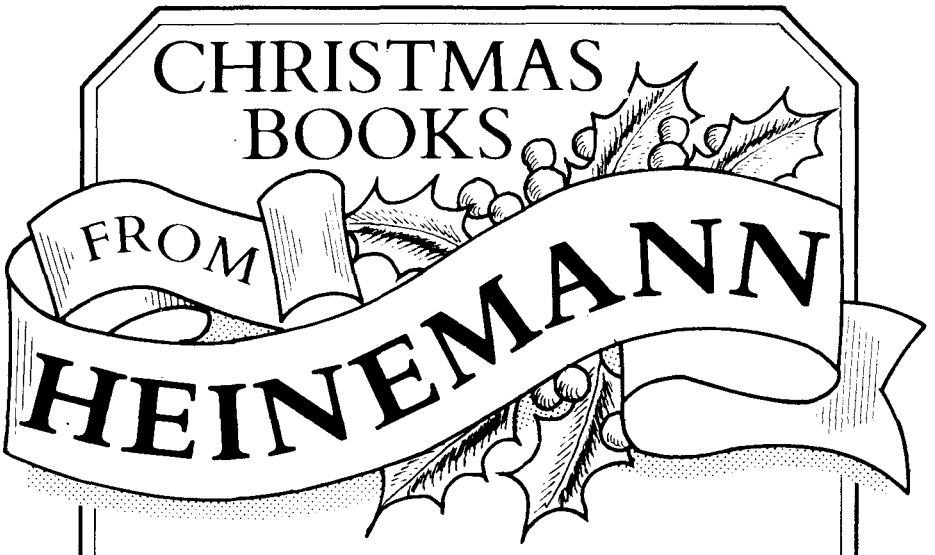
A Report from the Bunker with William Burroughs
VICTOR BOCKRIS
Hutchinson £5.95

William Burroughs is an original and self-indulgent writer, and the latter characteristic has occasionally influenced those who write about him. However, this book by the author of a biography of Blondie and a collection of photographs of Muhammad Ali and Andy Warhol plumbs new depths. Conceived as a continuous dinner party with changing guests (Bockris planted a tape recorder on every suitable occasion), it offers cameos of Burroughs in conversation with a number of fashionable people ranging from Susan Sontag to Pattie Smith. Many of them have fascinating things to say: for example, Warhol wants to know what Burroughs thinks of people who wear earrings; Debbie Harry thinks she used to live in a haunted house; Mick Jagger asks whom he has shot.

Burroughs tolerates most of it with typical courtesy (the answer to the last, incidentally, is 'no one, lately') even when others are less polite than he is. When Lou Reed asks if writers sleep with their publishers, he replies 'not very often', and is relieved that he has never had to sleep with his. Burroughs is a wise man and a serious artist, and although these qualities are unlikely to be enhanced by further contact with Victor Bockris, he is nevertheless an interesting person to have along to dinner. His most extravagant statements usually have an authoritative ring to them, and his remarks on other writers are satisfyingly laconic. Of Kerouac he says: 'First there was this young guy sitting in front of the television in a tee shirt drinking beer with his mother, then there was an older, fatter guy sitting in front of the television in a tee shirt drinking beer with his mother.'

It is no surprise that he lists Conrad and Proust among his favourite writers nor to learn that he detests the English literary scene, which he finds parochial and mean. His remarks on discipline and technique in writing are well-informed and his message to writers is 'keep your eyes open'. Coming from the author of the most readable convulsion in the history of literature, *Naked Lunch*, this may sound a bit thick. There are many good photographs, the best of Burroughs grasping a long knife, looking more cadaverous than ever, and smiling. How seldom we see him smile.

James Campbell



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ISRAEL
Elfi Pallis

Inside struggle

The Longest War
JACOBO TIMERMAN
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Argentinian editor Jacobo Timerman became an Israeli in 1979 when exiled by General Videla's junta after five months of torture had failed to wring any confession of subversion from him. An ardent Zionist since his youth, he still regards Israel as the only true Jewish destiny. Yet, when asked by his soldier son whether he should return to his unit in Lebanon or risk imprisonment by disobeying military orders, Timerman replies:

> Son, you can't compare an Argentine gaol to an Israeli gaol. In our gaols only Arabs are maltreated and you are a member of the superior race. It's true that once we were the people chosen by God to be witnesses of his truth, but now we have girded ourselves for the murder of another people . . .

The Longest War is about the struggle going on within Israeli Jews like the Timermans, rather than about the battles fought a few miles further north.

'Sharon's war', as Timerman terms it, threw many hitherto ardently anti-Arab Israelis into a state of confusion. Without any tangible victory in sight, they became uneasy about the appalling carnage they were causing in Lebanon. A well-organised peace movement took the chance of putting forward as an alternative to perpetual warfare some, however vague, Israeli arrangement with the Palestinians. In the face of a way out, the Israelis' stiff upper lip towards their own casualties started to crumble. Parents and spouses bereaved in the Lebanese fighting accused their government of instigating a pointless war in order to cover up economic failures. Anti-war protests organised by frontline soldiers made it impossible to write off opponents of the invasion as cowards.

Raised on propaganda images of the Palestinians, Israelis had been surprised to find in the shelled refugee camps communities that exuded a familiar pride in their national identity. 'To understand the existence of the other and then to admit his existence without hatred' has, according to Timerman, been a new experience for Israelis. But can they afford such feelings, given the threat posed by the Arab states? He asks the Israeli officers escorting him through Lebanon whether anyone in the Middle East can withstand the Israeli armed forces. Nobody, they reply. 'If nobody can stop us, that means that nobody can threaten us', concludes Timerman.

He is clear about the three factors that have enabled the Likud government to ignore its opposition. Most important remains the (unexplained) affection felt by Israel's oriental Jews for Mr Begin himself. 'Another major ingredient in the dangerous Israeli feeling of omnipotence', however, is 'the unconditional support of the diaspora Jews for what they indiscriminately call Israel'. Lastly, there is American support.

Through Timerman's eyes, we see the young trees ordered by his local council being lovingly planted in his street, not by Israelis themselves by Arab workers ferried in for the job from the villages in which they are authorised to live. He feels sick over 'this Israel which wants to be South Africa'. At other times, he falls victim to Israeli mythology. Looking at the land of Kibbutz Gesher Haziv in Galilee, he reflects 'how in the past this was a desert'. Galilee, of course, has never been a desert, and Kibbutz Gesher Haziv farms the fields that used to belong to the Palestinian villagers of al-Zeeb, now refugees in Lebanon.

Timerman is convinced that 'Israelis can no longer be cured without the help of others', and that their saviours can only be the Jews living overseas. □

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Oranges for the Son of Alexander Levy
NELLA BIELSKI
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Of our mothers, our grandmothers, our great grandmothers, what remains? We know nothing of them except their names and the dates of their marriages and the number of children they bore. All these novelists seek to fill the gaps in the bare chronicle of attachments to which Virginia Woolf drew attention half a century ago. What happens to women before and after their recorded appearance as forks in a family tree? Can fiction turn history inside out and find distinction in obscurity, individuality in collective selflessness, significance in domestic routine? Three national Arts Councils – Irish, Australian and British – have assisted these honourable attempts to give credit where it is due, in disclosures of submerged identity.

Mary Rose Callaghan pays homage to the streets, shops, bars, and ripe ould eccentrics of Dublin, while satirising some of its institutions. The Christian Brothers still beat their pupils: 'Good grief, girl, do you want them to give up everything?' Men about town, impresarios of the avant-garde, journalists, film-makers, veterans and tyros of the Republic's cultural elite are mere provincial gossips; vain, petty, boorish, boozed. The banks of the River Liffey are haunted by literary ghosts (Swift, Yeats, Joyce) whose revered sayings mingle with ironic trains of contemporary thought. The city's statues are mostly male, the beggars often pregnant.

The principal **Mothers** of the title are all single. Cousin Aggie, rich and saintly, long ago renounced lover, infant and a promising career as a playwright in deference to her parents' wishes. Harriet, an acerbic widow, bereft of her grown-up son and increasingly disillusioned with her job as an editor, contemplates re-marriage. For Ronnie, the youngest, whose test for conception has just proved positive, the possibility of a London abortion introduces conflict and suspense. But not for long. Despite moments of flippancy and farce, this is at heart a sentimental, conventional and predictable tale in which charwomen are ribald, death-beds peaceful and heroines pro-Life.

Barbara Hanrahan's story of unsettled settlers in late 19th-century Queensland opens with a burial in a Lutheran churchyard shortly before the birth of **Dove** herself. The deceased happens to be a German giantess whose grotesque build hints at the baroque shape and Grimm ambience of things to come. Watching the scene, the small daughter of an itinerant preacher rejoices in its grand scale: '. . . the pattern loomed large'. So too does the pattern of this saga, with the slow evolution of character between cradle and grave, and the early foreshadowings of later doom.

The plot deals less with choices and actions than with fates and states, dramatising continuity and change with theatrical props, heirlooms and curses. A capricious dowager in a crenellated castle collects orphans, one of whom, her jealous heir, later recognises an ancestral necklace on a pauper's neck. Thirsting for revenge, he enslaves a former rival with the lure of luxury, only to be brought low himself, in a fiery apocalypse, by the wrath of God. . .

The extravagances of this romantic tragedy are underpinned by periodic news of the Empire: chronological allusions to inventions and celebrities, fashions and epidemics, King Edward's funeral, the Great War, the Depression. In this rainbow-hued prose, agricultural machinery and a suburban bakehouse shine as brightly as chandeliers, 'jewelled jellies' and 'cascades of lace' at a society ball. Accordingly, each chapter unwraps a shiny new parcel of sensuous evocations and lyrical intensities beneath the wondering gaze of an observant child: in turn Crystal, her younger sister Dove, and her niece Clare. Generations come and go, but we see everything through the eyes of an innocent girl, generally one who is heading for some nasty shock.

The momentous and the mundane are naturally combined in the narrative of Nella Bielski, who describes familiar pangs – the pain of absence – in an extraordinary context. **Oranges for the Son of Alexander Levy** is the third of her four accomplished novels and the first to have been translated from French into English. As Liola tends her dying mother in a Soviet hospital – 'in socialist countries emergencies are dealt with quickly' – she recalls Xenia's past, her gestures, the warmth of her kitchen, her war-time efforts to feed and clothe her children, the return of her mutilated husband from the Front. Liola first met her own husband while studying Philosophy at Moscow University, during the political crisis of the Fifties. He has now deserted their Paris flat. In recording the simultaneous loss of these two loves, she discovers the skills and stamina of the survivor, among cherished memories of friends.

A bewildered narrator needs a clear sense of direction; it takes poise and precision to convey fear and trembling. The Russian tradition of autobiography, with its fierce dignity and poignant detail, the art practised by Paustovsky and Mandelstam, seems paradoxically strengthened by exile and estrangement, as if meditative honesty flourished amid shifting official versions of the truth. □

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FILMS
John Coleman

Honest Injun

Gandhi (A)
Odeon, Leicester Square
The Dybbuk (A)
Everyman, from 5 December
Ciao! Manhattan (X)
Scala

'No man's life can be encompassed in one telling.' An opening title freely admits this and more, stressing a fidelity to the *spirit* of the record rather than a foredoomed blow-by-blow account of Mohandas K. Gandhi's progress from law studies in London to a status – and not just in India – verging on sainthood. Sir Richard Attenborough's **Gandhi** aims to project 'the heart of the man', no mean ambition in itself, and if that entails some fairly breathtaking pruning of history's ramifications, the relegation of matters of great moment to one-liners or even oblivion, so be it. Attenborough's 20-year magnificent obsession, spelt out in his book *In Search of Gandhi* (Bodley Head, £9.95), was unlikely to result in more than a big-screen epic, with the inevitable simplicities of the genre, after all. There seem to be grave difficulties in making something as gnarled, authentic and interesting as a sow's ear out of a silk purse. From the garden-party assassination that starts the show and the colossal and beautifully marshalled funeral procession in New Delhi that follows, the production values of this 188-minute, 22 million-dollar movie are impeccable: money is seen to be spent on massed crowds, impressive locations, fine technicians.

But a couple of things call for special, immediate note. The first is one for sentiment – that Attenborough, after hideous setbacks, achieved his decent, mad dream. The second is, of course, Ben Kingsley's credibility as Gandhi, ageing from the natty, black-haired 'smart bloody kaffir' lawyer slung out of a 1st-class train compartment in the South African 1890s to the skimpily-clad old twinkler gunned down in 1948. He is very well supported by Rohini Hattangady as his loyal, long-suffering wife Ba, another small triumph for acting and make-up as the years take their toll; but it is his subtly shaded performance, as it had to do, that irradiates the set-pieces *and* powerfully exists between them, no less important a feat. Because John Briley's script (available as a Duckworth paperback, £5.95: *Gandhi: The Screenplay*), his own write after earlier versions by Gerald Hanley and Robert Bolt, has to cover a hell of a lot of happenings while attempting to catch the elusive Mahatma's 'heart', there is a sense of scamper about it: oddly enough, this leaves some tame and pious patches to be sat through. With all the Indian goodwill in the world behind director and writer, presumably a degree of self-censorship operated. One could have done with a spikier man-saint; and the plea isn't for prurient delvings into the business of Gandhi's young bed-warmers in old age, and the like. One is really asking for the sort of sophistication a well-meaning, inspirational film with aspirations to getting a larger budget back – and a film centred on a good, non-violent world-shaker at that, with some very naive notions of his country's economy – is in no position to grapple with.

Meanwhile, there is some sterling craftsmanship and there are wily, intelligent lines. Gandhi's stubborn bravery during the burning of the native passes episode in South Africa, the lying down with marching miners before baffled police horses, the rammed-home horrors of the Amritsar massacre of 1919 (with Edward Fox ice-faced as infamous General Dyer) are painfully well

Ben Kingsley as Gandhi

executed. Nehru (Roshan Seth) and arrogant Jinnah (Alyque Padamsee) watch with shifting amusement, irritation, admiration as the dedicated pacifist grows in stature and guile; earning the respect of a British judge (Trevor Howard) who reluctantly sentences him to six years; garnering the fond names of 'Bapu' (father), then 'Mahatma' (great soul); blandly proposing a day of 'prayer and fasting' instead of the more provocative 'strike'; accepting jail willingly and steadily, literally turning the other cheek, to be hit if necessary and shame his assailant. The cast is packed with safe, splendid actors (Gielgud, Saeed Jaffrey, Athol Fugard as Smuts, Candice Bergen as photographer Margaret Bourke-White), who somehow increase the benison of Mr Kingsley being almost a film unknown. As he fasts to the edge of death on a Muslim rooftop in a riot-torn Calcutta, Hindu against Muslim, this Gandhi is brought the impossible news; peace has occurred – and he thinks he might have some orange juice, a bit of bread. And the film reaches late heights here, as the message can be re-read. He did it, but he is irreplaceable, could groom no heirs – unless it was the equally ill-fated Martin Luther King. Maybe there should have been more weight on this: that a second's concentrate of evil can wipe out a lifetime's diffusion of good.

OFFERED as the most important work of Yiddish cinema, a claim few would feel comfortably positioned to dispute, Michael Waszynski's **The Dybbuk** was made in Poland in 1938. Rescued and restored after the war-time destruction of Warsaw, it proves to be a considerable curiosity, not so much leaning as hurtling headlong into Expressionism. It is also quite clearly part of that folk-magic tradition we associate with the writings of Isaac Bashevis Singer. Taken – and at no great remove by the look of it – from a stage play by Anski, the film is set in the superstition-soaked village of Miropol. Two black-hatted chums wish to make a vow that their potential offspring will one day marry (there is a sexual or *sexing* confidence here that seems premature, but let it pass). Time does, anyway; during a theatrical storm, in a rowboat, one of the men drowns while his wife gives birth to a son, Hannan; the other fellow, Sender, gains a daughter, Lea, but loses his wife in the process. A Messenger, who pops up and disappears at will, wagging a stiff beard and given to gnomic utterances to the consternation of most, figures frequently in what ensues.

Which has its wild virtues. Sender, caught counting his money in three quick sequences as his daughter grows from babe to marriageable maid, determines she shall wed rich; but the Messenger plants itinerant, now grown Hannan as a poor but fetching dinner guest. He scorns the Talmud in favour of cabbalism and, having fallen for Lea and she for him, makes a pact with Satan. Unfortunately Hannan mysteriously dies, when he returns as a dybbuk to inhabit Lea's body and maybe soul. Songs, chants and dances punctuate the doomed action now, with an extraordinary *danse macabre* in the village square, Lea scarily told by papa and aunt to graciously foot it with the deformed local beggars and finding herself in the arms of a skull-face whose features dissolve to her dead beloved Hannan's. There is cross-cutting between this eerie revelry and stately ladies pavaning indoors; the camera pans to and fro with black, free humour (one suspects), sidling past a white-robed corpse to old Messenger blowing out a lamp. There is also a very dozy rabbi who has to perform an exorcism. The mind boggled, but agreeably.

Ciao! Manhattan, cobbled to an end in 1972 by two men who should be as nameless as they are witless (John Palmer, David Welsman), links clammy hands with a recent publication, *Edie* (Cape, £9.95), in that it mixes old black-and-white Warhol Factory footage of rich, wacky Edie Sedgwick – who took to drugs and drink the way Warhol takes to rich, wacky victims – with some colour intimacies of the girl flashing her scarred, siliconed breasts back home again in California, stoned out of her wits

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and mumblingly insistent the ghouls – Palmer, Weisman – should photograph her having her electric shock treatment. Called Susan in the random film, which is almost beneath pathos, Ms Sedgwick had the vestige of luck to die, at 28, two months after its completion.

Pleasures from the London Film Festival would have to include the Thames Television-sponsored *Flesh and the Devil* (Garbo and Gilbert striking charged erotic sparks from lighting a cigarette) and *Show People* (Marion Davies allowed to be clown-pert funny as soon as her backer Hearst wasn't raising Kane on the set). Channel Four will offer these, with the essential Carl Davis – Wren Orchestra scores, next year. *In parvo*, but not in silence. Elsewhere: quick, unsurprising praise for Satyajit Ray's own short-story film, *Pikoo*, small boy sketching flowers during harsh, domestic day, and 50-minute *Deliverance*, the awkward death of an untouchable, from a Premchand tale: top satiric form. □

OPERA

Andrew Clements

Everyman's Wagner

The Ring
BBC 2/Radio 3

With exquisite timing it was Channel 4 that conclusively demonstrated the strength of the BBC's first attempt at televising *The Ring*. On the first Sunday afternoon of the new service it broadcast a satellite relay of the Metropolitan Opera's production of *Idomeneo*. It was no worse, and in some ways a bit better than many direct transfers from opera house to small screen; even the presence of Luciano Pavarotti in the cast for a Mozart opera was not the disaster that could have been predicted. But introduce TV cameras into a conventional production and the warts begin to look like molehills and the molehills like mountains; the change of scale breaks all the bounds of credibility. Gestures that are designed in the theatre to reach up to the back of the gods turn into incomprehensible semaphore; the half-dozen facial expressions that can carry a singer through the usual gamut of operatic emotions begin to seem a little lacking in subtlety and relevance. The effect is far more like reportage than television drama.

The pre-eminent and most profound revelation of Patrice Chéreau's *Ring* as it now appears in act-long segments on BBC2 is the smooth and close grain of the production. The detail seems so perfectly proportioned, the action so finely honed, that it's hard to believe the video recording was made on the stage of the Bayreuth Festspielhaus (though the exemplary balance between stage and pit and the quite unique orchestral blend testify to that) in complete, single-act takes. Yet in preparing the staging for television Brian Large had apparently little to do in adapting Chéreau's original.

As an opera producer, Chéreau seems to me to possess a single, priceless asset that gives him a definite edge over nearly all his peers: he can make singers act to the limit of their abilities and often surpass them. This skill could be seen most clearly in *Die Walküre:* Jeannine Altmeyer's Sieglinde and Peter Hofmann's Siegmund have both been part of recent revivals of Götz Friedrich's *Ring* at Covent Garden; there they make a dull and uninteresting couple whose fate leaves one unmoved. For Chéreau they become passionate, involved and involving characters, human sacrifices in a cosmic tragedy; their plight concerns us, and Siegmund's unusually brutal murder is for once truly shocking. Similar revelations are to be found in each of the music dramas; here at last one can believe that a producer has had the courage to place acting on a par with singing.

The result sometimes turns conventional wisdom on its head. In the theatre Donald McIntyre is an efficient Wotan, without the vocal splendour that one ideally associates with the role. Yet on television, I suspect, a more sonorous baritone, capable of filling the largest auditorium, would have appeared out of scale, as would a Fricka of traditional, caricatured shrewishness. But Hanna Schwarz and McIntyre turn their confrontation in the second act of *Walküre* into a clash of intellects rather than naked aggression. (Both singers, interestingly, are far more convincing here than they are in *Rheingold*; there is a good deal of unevenness through the cycle, in the singing especially.) And where in *Rheingold* Wotan descends to common barter over Freia's fate his impotence is all the more convincing than it would be did he sound more regal, more conventionally god-like. Altogether this Wotan, surrounded by fawning courtiers – a foppish Donner, an ineffectual Frohe, a marvellously conceived Loge from Heinz Zednik who does not always sound very ingratiating but who dominates the opera from the moment he appears – creates an unusually resonant metaphor.

WHEN CHEREAU'S view of the cycle was first introduced at Bayreuth it was criticised most of all for its liberties with the settings. The dislocations, the blatant time travelling, matter very little now. That the Rhinemaidens guard the gold in a hydro-electric dam rather than a river bed, that Wotan is a Victorian patriarch and Brunnhilde apparently a suffragette, that *Götterdämmerung* is transported to a contemporary tenement block, all are quite irrelevant to the television viewer, provided that consistency is maintained within each setting, and that the acting is good enough to keep disbelief suspended. Both are guaranteed here.

It might seem curious to treat Pierre Boulez's contribution to the achievement as almost secondary, especially when it was Boulez who initiated this production, and when the orchestral component is so crucial to any worthwhile attempt at staging *The Ring*. But in this case the conductor has placed himself completely at the service of the production, tailoring his approach quite unselfishly.

I would guess that until he began to work on this production Boulez's ideas about interpretation of *The Ring* were not fully worked out, other than in schematic terms – his dislike of rhetoric for its own sake, his fondness for a top-, rather than bottom-heavy balance. His approach now therefore is empirical, the product of a true collaboration; with another director, one could imagine, his conducting could be very different. There are still passages in which he cannot disguise his impatience – the close of *Rheingold* lacks grandeur, parts of the first act of *Walküre* are pushed forward irreverently – but in the opera house Boulez seems to have come a long way since he conducted *Parsifal* at Bayreuth a decade ago, and the result is crisp and, crucially, totally functional.

The BBC's decision to broadcast the tetralogy initially an act at a time is perfectly valid when the performances are so strong and imaginative. When the four operas are screened on successive evenings next February to celebrate the centenary of Wagner's death it will be fascinating to discover whether the breaks in historical continuity and the doubling of parts destroy any of the dramatic credibility. This *Ring* is going to be watched by more people than any other; it is Everyman's Wagner. It is in the best sense also Everyman's Opera, for it could do more to dispel the often justified attacks on the dramatic shortcomings of music drama than any other production I have encountered. □

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

Earth magic

A Midsummer Night's Dream
SHAKESPEARE *Cottesloe*
Camelot
LERNER AND LOEWE *Apollo, Victoria*
Man and Superman
SHAW *Haymarket*
Waiting
JULIA KEARSLEY *Lyric Studio, Hammersmith*

Peter Brook may have been the first director to make Puck's request for applause at the end of the **Dream,** give me your hands, if we be friends', an excuse for a communal love-in, with actors scampering down the aisles and genially wringing the audience's outstretched paws; but Bill Bryden plays the trick with the more consistency and point. His fairies, you see, flit about a late-Victorian Athens in tattered doublets and gowns, most of them a bosky brown, green or brown-green in hue. They are partly

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woodland spirits, partly Elizabethan spectres, and are presumably meant to represent both nature and tradition, joint forces that, in spite of calamities seen and reported, turn out to be surprisingly benign to earthlings like Helena and Demetrius, Theseus and Hippolyta, you and me. Lovers are paired off, marriages are blessed; and the general mood of reconciliation and rebirth ends by embracing us in the audience, who up to this point may have been wondering why we were being asked to perch on cushions round the acting area, submit to intermittent invasions by the cast, and endure all the other attentions of 'participatory theatre'. We too are getting our curative dose of earth magic from the local *lares* and *penates*.

Speaking for myself, I found it agreeable medicine, neither as cloying as this optimistic approach might have made it nor as harsh as some recent criticism has supposed the *Dream* subliminally to be. Since the idea is that the fairies (or what they stand for) permeate all human dealings, they are much more present and visible than usual; and this can be a nuisance, since it means you sometimes have to watch the mechanicals and the lovers round, over, under or through the bodies of eavesdropping Mustardseeds, Cobwebs or Moths. Yet they merit the more-than-average attention given them, because the performances of their principals are enthralling. Paul Scofield's Oberon: a stately old nob whose slightly stylised stance and movements suggest that he might at any moment launch into a dignified court dance; fastidious, arrogant, melancholy, sombre, yet also kindly and caring; an intent watcher and listener, for ever poring over the knotty conundrum of humankind. Susan Fleetwood's Titania: firm yet not aggressive with Oberon, tender with Bottom, half-amused to discover the trick they have played on her, and always exuding an unaffected warmth. Never before have I heard such love and grief in the long speech about the rotting corn, flooded rivers and other ecological disasters resulting from her quarrel with the fairy-king. Mankind, whom it's their duty and delight to protect, is suffering; and it's their fault.

There is no danger of sympathy declining into sentimentality in Bryden's treatment of his fairyland, because Jack Shepherd's Puck is on hand to remind us, with all the wicked glee he can muster, that these hidden forces can also be capricious, heartless, even malicious. The real danger is that other parts of the play will dwindle in importance and impact, and to some extent this happens, and not only because of the minor visibility problem I've mentioned. Theseus and Hippolyta go for little; the four lovers, though more genuinely sentient than usual, don't generate their full quota of laughter; and it's left to the mechanicals, dogged tradesmen in their Sunday best, to redress the balance a bit. In Derek Newark, a Bottom with social as well as histrionic ambitions and an ability to lift his accent from downstairs to upstairs (or at least halfway upstairs) at the turn of an internal switch, the National has found a splendidly downbeat comedian, all nudge, wink and sly pomposity. And it's nice to see the play-within-a-play performed as if Thisbe as well as Pyramus mattered.

IT HAS been a week of big performances. Here's the grizzled and beetling Scofield. Here's Richard Harris, bringing plenty of soldierly charisma to **Camelot**, but failing to disguise that what should surely have been a series of extrovert Arthurian adventures has become yet another claustrophobic triangle-drama, set in an emotional hothouse whose only novel aspect is its antiquity. And here's Peter O'Toole, whom we last saw baying at Banquo, his wife, the witches, the spectral danger, anything and everything, in the same monotonous baritone, rather as if Sir Henry Irving and the Hound of the Baskervilles had been reincarnated in a single voicebox. Would his Tanner prove to be as eccentric in conception and execution as that infamous Macbeth?

Well, he certainly looks a bit odd, a long, yellow, gangling figure in white, something between Frankenstein's Monster and Marley's Ghost. It isn't easy to see why Lisa Harrow's quietly predatory Ann Whitefield should fancy him sexually. Again, his consonants are apt to pour hectically out and get jammed up together, a higgledy-piggledy morass of vowel-less blarney. It isn't easy to see why Ann thinks he'll be successful at sounding off in Parliament. Yet Tanner's character is one that moves to and over the top rather often, so the performance is not altogether misconceived. Nor, as it turns out, is it lacking in concentration, care and even trenchancy, intellectually or emotionally. If the prevalent tone is (admittedly) pretty galvanic, O'Toole also has his contained, watchful moments, notably in his scene with Joyce Carey's fretful, twittering Mrs Whitefield, which he plays with great sensitivity and unselfishness. Though this **Man and Superman** isn't over-all as impressive as the National's revival two years ago – and how could it be, with the Don Juan dream-sequence excised? – it has its charged passages.

At the Lyric Studio there's Julia Kearsley's **Waiting**, a play covering and concerning Ripper territory in the geographical, emotional and moral senses of the term. It has, I see, been dismissed as raw anti-man propaganda: an understandable simplification, given the hatred and contempt for women displayed by most of its male population, but a simplification all the same. Actually, it has less in common with the sisterhood's more strident rhetoric than with the plays of E.A. Whitehead, which aren't the more partisan or less objective because they chronicle the mutual hostility of the sexes in sometimes violent, ugly, sickening language. Ms Kearsley, I think, sees that hostility as being less instinctive than Whitehead does, more the result of environment and upbringing, experience and conditioning; she is also open-minded enough to introduce two characters, one of each sex, to suggest that genuine warmth and decency can survive, even in a society which conspires to make everything think, feel and even act like the Ripper himself. This is a bleak piece, but well written and absorbing: in short, indisputably talented. □

TELEVISION
William Boyd

Glasses darkly

THREE-dimensional television is here! Out of this week's copy of the *TV Times* fluttered a pair of makeshift cardboard specs, one thin plastic lens blue, the other red. Dutifully I parked myself in front of the set, held the spectacles like lorgnettes on the end of my nose and prepared to marvel. Two days later I was led off to bed, headache pulsing like a Belisha beacon, cramp in my right arm, eyeballs pink and raw in their sockets. It hadn't worked! Was there something wrong with me, I wondered? Everything looked as if . . . as if I'd been looking at the set through red and blue plastic lenses.

In actual fact this fantasy wasn't too far removed from the truth. On **The Real World** (TVS) where 3D TV got its first try-out in Britain the easy confidence of the two presenters must have stirred similar doubts about how well retinas were functioning in many viewers. A bat was meant to fly out of the screen; a bull was meant to snort all over your living room carpet. Gazing intently at the fuzzy images (no ordeal too demanding for this column) the familiar two-dimensional world remained inviolate. There was – I think – some improvement in what photographers call depth of field, but the effect was tantalisingly elusive and hard to retain. Such gains were undercut anyway by the drab colour produced by the glasses and the ghosting of the pictures. The thrills, if they exist, are very fleeting. 3D will not push the viewing figures up, only better programmes will. After half-an-hour of watching through my coloured glasses my eyes felt curiously hot, as if they were being sluiced in lukewarm gravy. Not recommended.

I was almost reaching for the glasses again when **The Norman Gunston Show** (C4) came on. Gunston is Channel 4's second Australian comic to be unleashed upon us and though it's not saying a great deal, he's certainly better than the first, Paul Hogan. He doesn't look better, though. Gunston's approach is the comic as creep. Etiolated and sweaty, he has combed half a dozen strands of hair from the back of his head and stuck them down on his bald pate. He never has fewer than three shaving scars, the fresh blood staunched with scraps of tissue. They look like little red and white flowers growing out of his face. His stock in trade is the interview – usually with the rich and famous – where he poses as an Australian newsman who asks all the wrong questions. To Elke Somer: 'What's Rod Stewart really like?' To Burt Reynolds: 'I was hoping to meet your mother Debbie', and the like. These would be genuinely amusing if they weren't so patently set up. The star's complicity is usually all too apparent. Only on a few occasions did the format work, and here

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the effect is akin to *Candid Camera*. We know Gunston is posing; the viewer becomes an accomplice in the gag. That trust has got to be maintained. As soon as we sense that the target is in on the joke too, then the thing falls flat.

There was a fair amount of falling flat going on in **Three of a Kind** (BBC-2) as well. The trio – David Copperfield, Lenny Henry and Tracy Ullmann – have evolved something of a recognisable style for this comedy show which is meant to be bright, slight and fast-paced, but no amount of talent can make anything out of the lame material they had to work with. Sample: a man holds out an apple, asks 'How do you make an apple crumble?' and crushes the apple in his hand. Funny? What about this. Man sitting at a table says, 'I'm so hungry I could eat a horse.' Stuffed horse falls on table. I suppose this is what you call 'zany' or 'wacky' humour.

The show has done everything it possibly can to make this sort of comedy work. There is the usual shamelessly compliant studio audience, howling with glee at the slightest provocation. Also no expense has been spared: some of the briefest skits – three seconds duration – have astonishingly elaborate sets. Many of the skits, too, end on a freeze frame. To be used sparingly, this device. It's a very easy way of ending a joke or a routine that hasn't got a punchline. It would be a useful – though daunting – trial of any comedy show if the thing were first run through without any of these props or supports. I suspect that *Three of a Kind* would look even more meagre and thin without them.

No such impoverishment in **The Sixties** (C4), where an intelligent commentary and a feast of archive material were evinced in support of the contention that 'the Sixties' in fact began several years before 1960. The perplexing feature about this decade is how little true nostalgia it encourages. The dominant emotions associated with it are curiosity and irony. Were we really like *that*? Did we *really* believe in such things? Could we ever have been seriously taken in by *him*? The Sixties have become the spotty adolescence of the late 20th century and now – older and wiser – we can laugh at our antics and assumptions: a pouting Cliff Richard as a symbol of moral decadence; Kennedy and Camelot at the White House. But like all adolescences it had its strong points, some of them alive and well today, others which could do with rejuvenating. We may scoff at Suez but with what aghast incredulity will the Falklands venture be regarded two decades hence? It seems we haven't grown up at all. Look who we're taken in by now. □

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Report **By Len the Unlucky**

Office-moving time: last Friday a large pantechnicon transported the Complex and its workforce to the new HQ in the East End. On arrival, discovered that no one had a front-door key. Hence this report is being penned at the Complex-in-exile – *viz.* a telephone kiosk on Clerkenwell Green. The lightbulb has been vandalised, so I've had to judge this one by feel: I *think* the entries are probably worth nine quid a shot.

Princess Margaret

Monday: A filthy day. Harrods sent me the wrong chocolates again. Had to get whatsherface to ring them, but still an hour's delay before they sent a man round. What happened to service? And how can you mistake Black Magic for anything else?
Tuesday: This new telly channel started. Hopeless. It started late, then nothing but plays about cracked proles.
Wednesday: Had to go and see *her*. The usual boring Big Sister thing, dreadfully mean with the gin, yapping dogs everywhere.
Thursday: Felt quite drained after yesterday. Then nothing but trouble. The remote-control TV thing went wonky. Bloody Japanese rubbish.
Friday: Towser called. Talks more than Roddy, less big-headed than Tony, but I might as well go to bed with a cup of cocoa.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Prince Charles

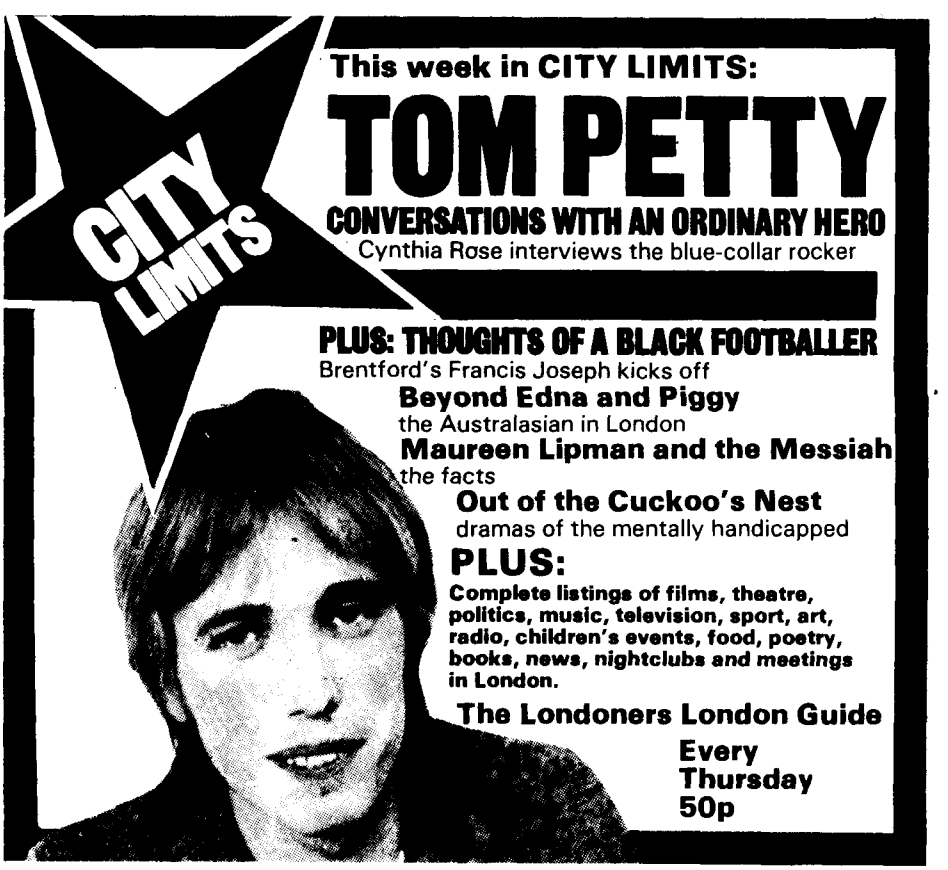
Sunday: Still feel I am not being tested enough, so tried plastic bag on head/feet in freezer ordeal while Diana was out buying Toblerone. Got my time up to 1 min 23 secs.
Monday: Jolly inspiring writer, Baden-Powell. Memo: have William in the Cubs. Get aide to research how Houdini did it. May try being cuff-linked.
Tuesday: Housekeeper complained to Diana about frozen custards left to thaw at side of freezer. Funny looks from Diana all evening.
Wednesday: Terrible cold. Penicillin. Feel guilty but relieved can't open new automatic lighthouse. Diana read me *The Challenge of Everest*.

GEORGE MOOR

The Queen Mother

Monday: Was got up. Had newspapers read to me. Apparently there has been a coup in Mustique, and Lillibet fuming with Andrew about it. Odd. Thought he was in Falklands. Papers stark raving mad, told my maid. 'You're psychic,' said she, 'that's the headline, Queen Mother.' Silly girl. Later, new window-cleaner appeared. Mumbled something about new standards (true! he's the fifth this week, security *is* being tightened! All fools, though. One mumbled about mirror, another about sun. Idiot small-talk these menials have). This one poked his head in. Asked my opinion of Anna Rexia. Did not correct his Latin. Corrected his facts. 'She'll never be *queen*,' I said. He hurried away. Called 'No – wait!' after him. 'I'll quote you, ta!' he replied. Odd. Must've gone to Fleet St. Evening papers headline NO WEIGHT. Cloth-ears. They *must* be short of news!

BILL GREENWELL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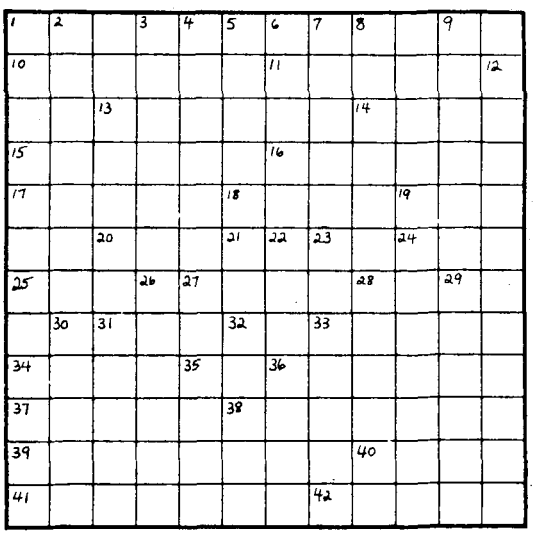


Some clues and/or answers refer to my favourite book which can be roughly line-illustrated by solvers if instead of writing H where it occurs in the grid they write a dot in the centre of the relevant squares and number these *from right to left* and row by row 1 to 6 and then draw straight lines connecting dots 3-4-6-5-1-2.

Name_____

Address_____

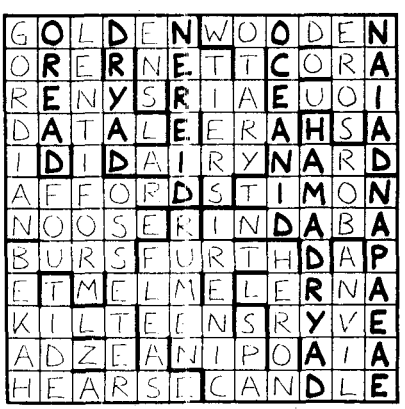
ACROSS

1 Employers of wicked ruses (5)
5 Street level reserved from elsewhere (7)
10 River some men encounter on return (4)
11 Go back against the current once, gaining metres with difficulty (6)
13 Company and non-English gear possibly, in hold (5)
14 Re lighting fires etc. this expert with hidden yen (4)
15 Where 34 works at length, assigned to authority (6)
16 How the can remained – positively *no* getting into one? (6)
17 Weapon you can get from Tesco (5)
18 Shop's stock value (5)
21 Rowers find these rings in regular places (3)
24 Weir – crazy to go over this ? (3)
25 Vital part lost overboard (3)
27 Round, hard mass showing certain amount of resistance (3)
31 This, given his, could be this each wears (5)
33 Sludgy harl – that could describe a mud-flow (5)
34 Scrambled eggs possibly made for 26 & 36's friend (6)
36 Hardly the book's saint, but the 'I' named in it at time? (6)
37 Go away from 34 perhaps, the bore! (4)
38 Casual wear – you can mess about in dem! (5)
39 Squabbles the motive force? (6)
40 Smart fellow to have this in pub, see? (4)
41 For each, the most unlikely stuffed 6 was really this (7)
42 Shout out 'Look! Here's a plant!' (5)

DOWN

1 This relative to produce bungled work no doubt (5,6)
2 This membrane's a sore developing (6)
3 Oared wildly before noon? ---- – to see what follows (4,2)
4 Wind blowing from 'Cisco or worse (7)
5 Emblem with cross symbol (4)
6 To turn out after time to be really 41, this, cased (5)
7 What raises river level we hear? Stop! (4)
8 Carry away wicked pastor (6)
9 Once harnesses some huge reservoirs (5)
12 Fox-terrier (no commentary possible without one?) (11)
18 Note in case – old 200? (3)
19 Some barred historic letter (3)
20 Cunning knowledge of painting (3)
22 1 Down once, in house mess (3)
23 License shot, lunar (7)
26 What you might call fellow to cheer up (one with comic songs?) (6)
28 With a rhinal disorder it's not hard to be nosy? (6)
29 What 26 & 34 were to the packing of one? (6)
30 Vowel-point goes out to left (5)
32 Barrier to escaping from maze – man would e.g. turn back (5)
35 34 in 15, say, getting info on time (4)
36 Court-fool not stone-hearted when it comes to mockery (4)

Solution to Salamanca 61



Unclued answers are the nymphs of mythology.

Prizewinners to Salamanca 61

K. M. & M. S. R. Wood (Orpington)
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Note: Because there is a special Christmas double issue on 17 December the solution to Salamanca 62 will appear in our 7 January issue with Salamanca 64.

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LISTINGS

Social/Cultural
Radical/Arts
Political

3-11 December

SEND DETAILS to: NS FREE LISTINGS at least 7 days in advance

FRI 3 DEC

BRIDGWATER, SOMERSET. CND campaign skills training weekend to 5 Dec. **Bristol 513631.**

BUSHEY (HERTS). Disarmament and Development. International Voluntary Service National Conference. Non-members welcome.

MANCHESTER. CND Christmas Party – till 2 a.m. West Indian Centre, Carmoor Road, Manchester 13.

LONDON EC4. Management in voluntary associations; one day conference, organised by Association of Researchers in Voluntary Action and Community Involvement. National Children's Bureau, 8 Wakely Street, EC4.

SAT 4 DEC

HALIFAX. First Halifax Alternative Book Fair. Treglade Hotel, Horton Street. A startling event. (0422) 43121.

KEIGHLEY. Trade unions and women; day school on women's participation. Keighley Technical College. (0535) 65421.

LONDON E8. *Troops Out Christmas Party* 3.30 p.m. Hackney Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, E8.

LONDON W1. Morning after. Birth control politics and practice, 10.50-5 p.m. Organised by PAS and NAC. 11-13 Charlotte Street, W1. **01-278 0153.**

LEWISHAM. 60s soul disco organised by Lewisham CND. 8 p.m. Lee Centre, 1 Old Road, SE12. 75p.

SOUTHWARK. Grand Opening of Southwark Unemployed Centre. Jack Jones, Harriet Harman, Bill Keys. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. 83 Peckham High Street, Southwark.

BATTERSEA. Red Rope Grand Inaugural Fancy Dress Disco, crypt of St Mary's Church, Battersea Church Road. SW11.

BIRMINGHAM. Marriage Today: Why Be a Wife? Open conference, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Extramural Dept, Birmingham University. **021-773 6063.**

SUN 5 DEC

LONDON WC1. Sexology: A science of desire or an ideology of control? Jeffrey Weeks lecture, 11 a.m., Library, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1.

MON 6 DEC

LONDON W11. Radical Nurses Meeting, 6.30 p.m. Health Education Centre, 304 Westbourne Grove, London W11. **NOTE: NOT** on 4 Dec. as in previous listings.
LONDON W1. History of the T&GWU. Jack Jones, Black Horse Pub, Rathbone Place, W1. History Workshop seminar. 8 p.m.

TUE 7 DEC

LONDON SW1. Labour's Programme for Health: What it means for London. Gwyneth Dunwoody MP. 6 p.m. House of Commons. Organised by Greater London Labour Party. **01-602 2723.**

WED 8 DEC

TOWER HAMLETS. 'How can Labour win the next election?' Peter Kellner, 7.30 p.m. 178 Whitechapel Road, E1. Organised by Tower Hamlets Fabian Society.

LAMBETH. Socialists and the Common Market. Discussion between Richard Balfe MEP and Bob Rowthorn. Lambeth Town Hall, 8 p.m. Organised by Ferndale Ward Labour Party.

LONDON W1. Civil Disobedience: the European response to Cruise Missiles? Discussion, 7 p.m. The Roebuck, 108 Tottenham Court Road, W1. Organised by London END.

THURS 9 DEC

LONDON WC2. The National Health Service: the jewel in the crown of socialism? Jeannette Mitchell. Discussion. 7.30 p.m. The White Swan, New Row, WC2. Organised by The Socialist Society. **01-734 0501.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

WOOLWICH. Grand Christmas Rally: Peace, jobs, freedom. E. P. Thompson, Ken Livingstone, Richard Balfe, Guy Barnett, Hilda Smith. Bar available. 7 p.m. Woolwich Public Hall, Market St, SE18. Organised by RAC Political Purposes Committee.

FORTHCOMING

10-12 DEC. Progressive League Golden Jubilee Conference. Speakers Fay Weldon, Lady Jean Medawar, Patricia Hewitt, James Berry. High Leigh, Hoddesdon. **01-435 5393.**

11 DEC. Troops Out Movement day conference on repressive policing techniques learned in Ireland. Caxton House, Archway. **01-278 8394.**

11 DEC. A Luta Continua: strategies for Socialist development in Mozambique and Angola. 10 a.m.-5.30 p.m. ULU, Malet St, London, WC1. Mozambique Angola Committee, 98 Great Russell St, WC1.

11 DEC. Human Sexuality Day school, Dept of Extra-Mural Studies, University of London, 26 Russell Square, WC1. **01-636 8000.**

11 DEC. LONDON SE17. Labour's economic strategy – a discussion conference organised by the Labour Party, chaired by Tony Benn. Debates on incomes policy, EEC and public ownership. Workshops include Women & the Economy, Social Security, the Role of Trade Unions, the City. Labour Party members only. Tickets from Labour Party, Walworth Road. Conference at County Hall, SE1, 10.30-5.15.

11 DEC. LONDON E1. Towards a jobs and training strategy for Docklands. Speakers include Michael Ward (GLC Employment & Industry Chair). Organised by Docklands Forum. Wapping Sports Centre, Tench St, 9.45-3.30. **Tel 01-377 1822.**

12-13 DEC. *Greenham Common;* mass picket, Greenham Common, Newbury, Berks.

15 DEC. Small Scale Combined Heat and Power schemes; one day seminar introduced by Colin Sweet. Polytechnic of South Bank, London.

18 DEC. Toy sale for Chilean children, Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road, London, N4. 10.30 a.m.-2.30 p.m. Chile Solidarity Campaign.

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Appointments

WEST MIDLANDS COUNTY COUNCIL

ASSISTANT COUNTY PLANNING OFFICER (STRATEGIC PLANNING)

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A suitable applicant is sought to succeed the present postholder, who has been promoted to a Deputy Chief Officer's post in another Metropolitan County.

The Strategic Planning Division is responsible for the Structure Plan and associated Local Plans; regional work into the West Midlands Forum of County Councils; research and intelligence; development control and public consultation. In addition it initiates major inner city schemes such as shopping improvements; new enterprise workshops and environmental improvements, and co-ordinates the land reclamation programme and inner areas programme in the County. It is also developing work and ideas in recreation, tourism, nature conservation and environmental education, and advises on minerals and waste disposal matters. The Division comprises approximately 80 permament staff and is currently responsible for some 220 staff, manual and craft employees employed on Task Force through the Manpower Services Programme; this is shortly to be expanded to 600.

The person appointed to this post will be expected to have substantial experience in planning; to have an understanding of the problems of metropolitan areas and the opportunities that can be created; to have a sense of humour and the capacity for hard work.

Further details and application forms (returnable by December 17, 1982) may be obtained from County Personnel Officer, County Hall, 1 Lancaster Circus Queensway, Birmingham (021-300 7824).

Candidates wishing to have informal discussions about this post are invited to ring 021-300 6400 to talk to Mr Alfred Wood, County Planner/ Architect or his Deputy, Mr Tony Struthers.

Council of Civil Service Unions

RESEARCH OFFICER

Applications are invited for the post of Research Officer in the office of the Council of Civil Service Unions.

The successful applicant will be expected to have a good honours degree or equivalent; experience in trade union research and a knowledge of one or more of the following fields is desirable: Labour Economics, Industrial Relations, Public Service Pay and Conditions of Service. Skill in drafting policy papers and in the preparation of briefs over the range of activities covered by the Council will also be important. The Research Officer will be expected to work closely with the Council's Secretariat.

The salary is the Civil Service Higher Executive Officer Scale which is within the range:

£9,042-£10,978 (incl. London Weighting)

Starting salary will be according to experience. Non-contributory pension arrangements, which offer broadly the benefits of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme, will apply. There will be an initial probation period of 12 months from the date of appointment.

Applications, giving full career and other personal details, including the names of 2 referees, should be sent *in confidence* to:

The Secretary, Council of Civil Service Unions, St. Andrew's House, 40 Broadway, London SW1H 0BT, by not later than 17 December, 1982.

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The Head of Department of Drama
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Closing date for applications: 23 December, 1982

Please quote reference NS on all correspondence.

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Applicants, preferably educated to degree standard, should have experience of social research and investigative work in the fields of policing, law enforcement and civil liberties. A good knowledge of information handling, storage and retrieval is also desirable.

The salary will be within the range indicated, inclusive of London Weighting Allowance.

For further details and an application form, which must be returned by 17th December 1982, write to the Director-General's Department, DG/AE/NS/112, Greater London Council, Room 202, The County Hall, London SE1 7PB, or telephone 01-633 3435/6651.

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